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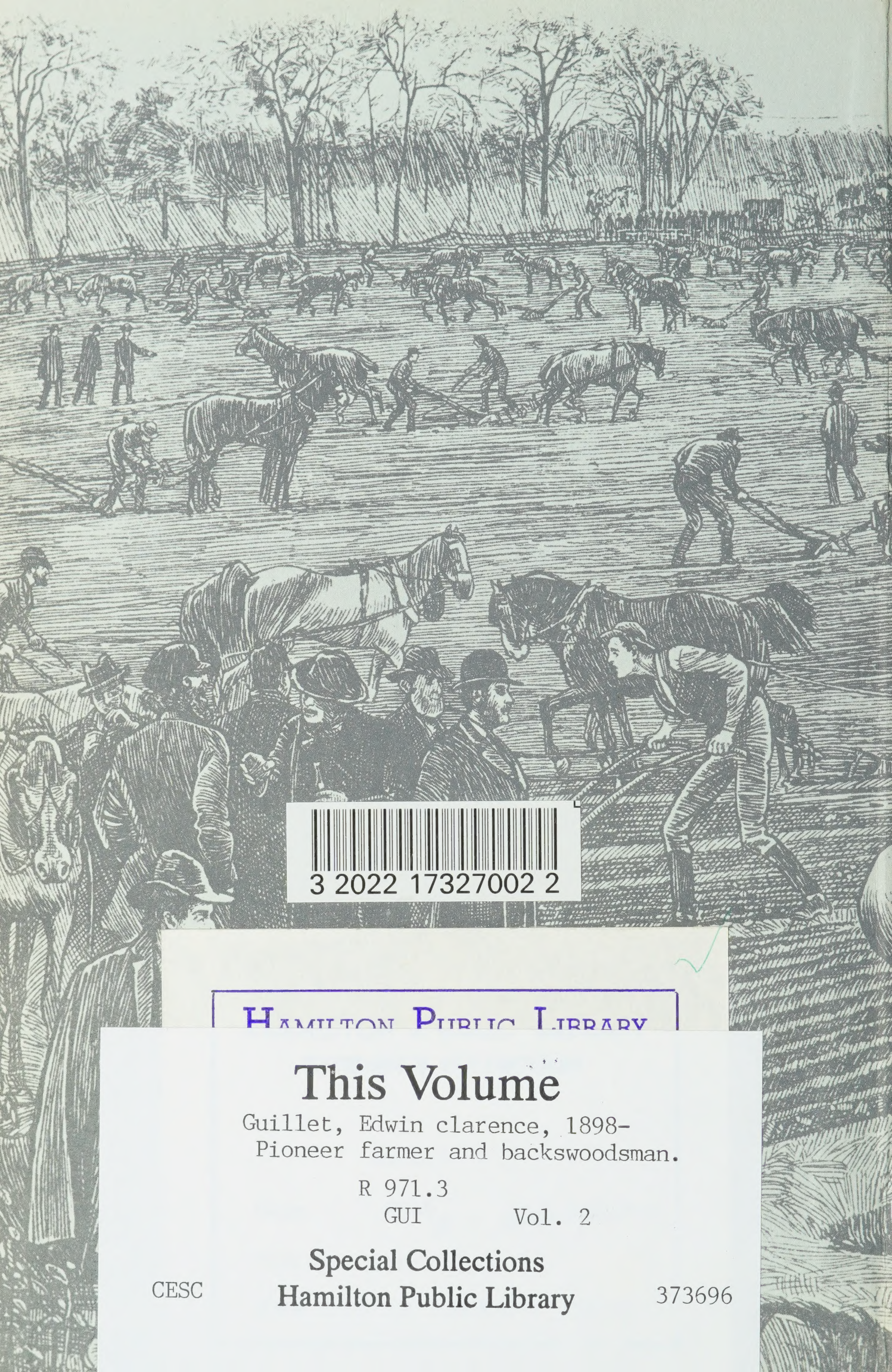

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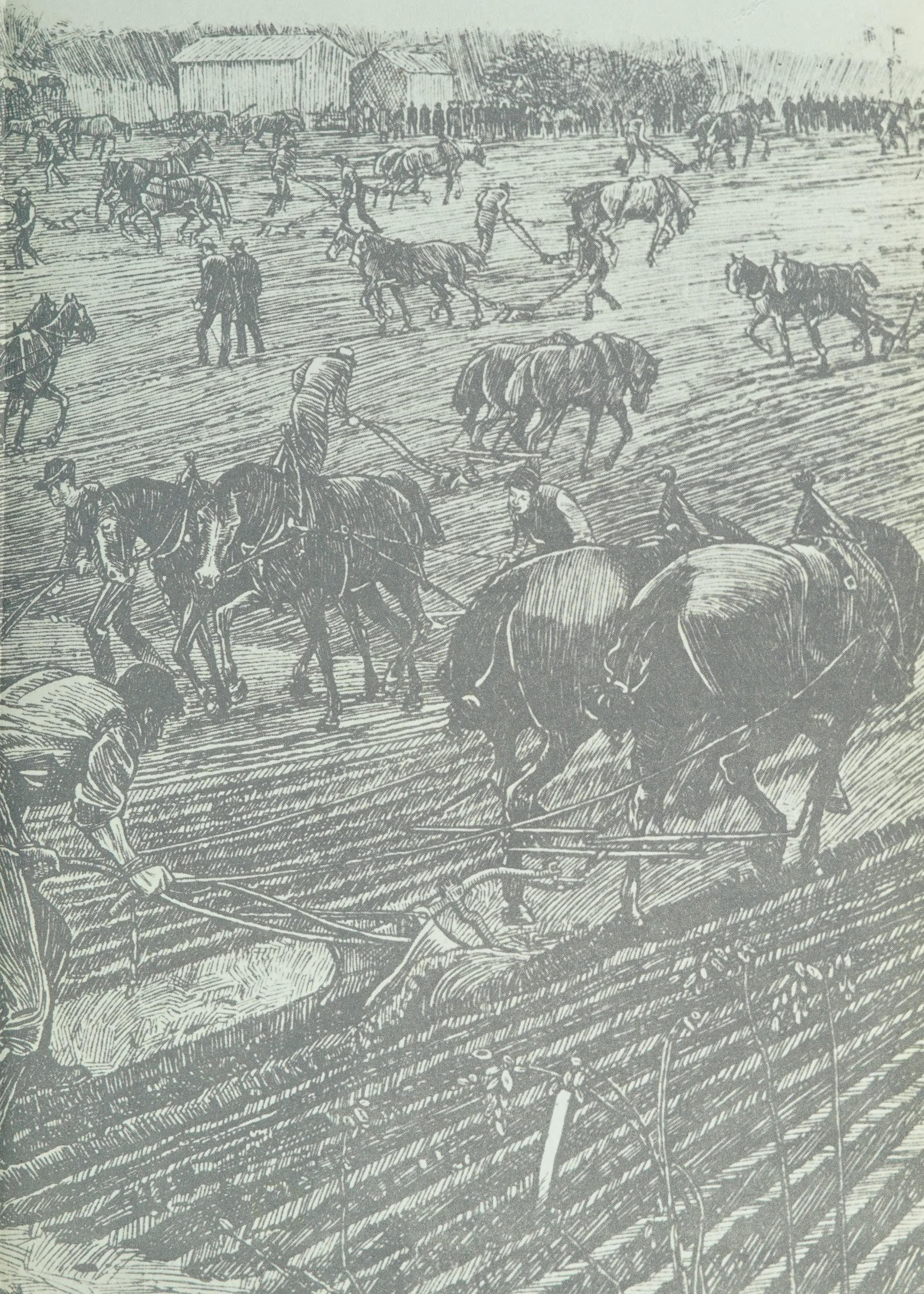

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THE PIONEER FARMER AND BACKWOODSMAN

VOLUME TWO

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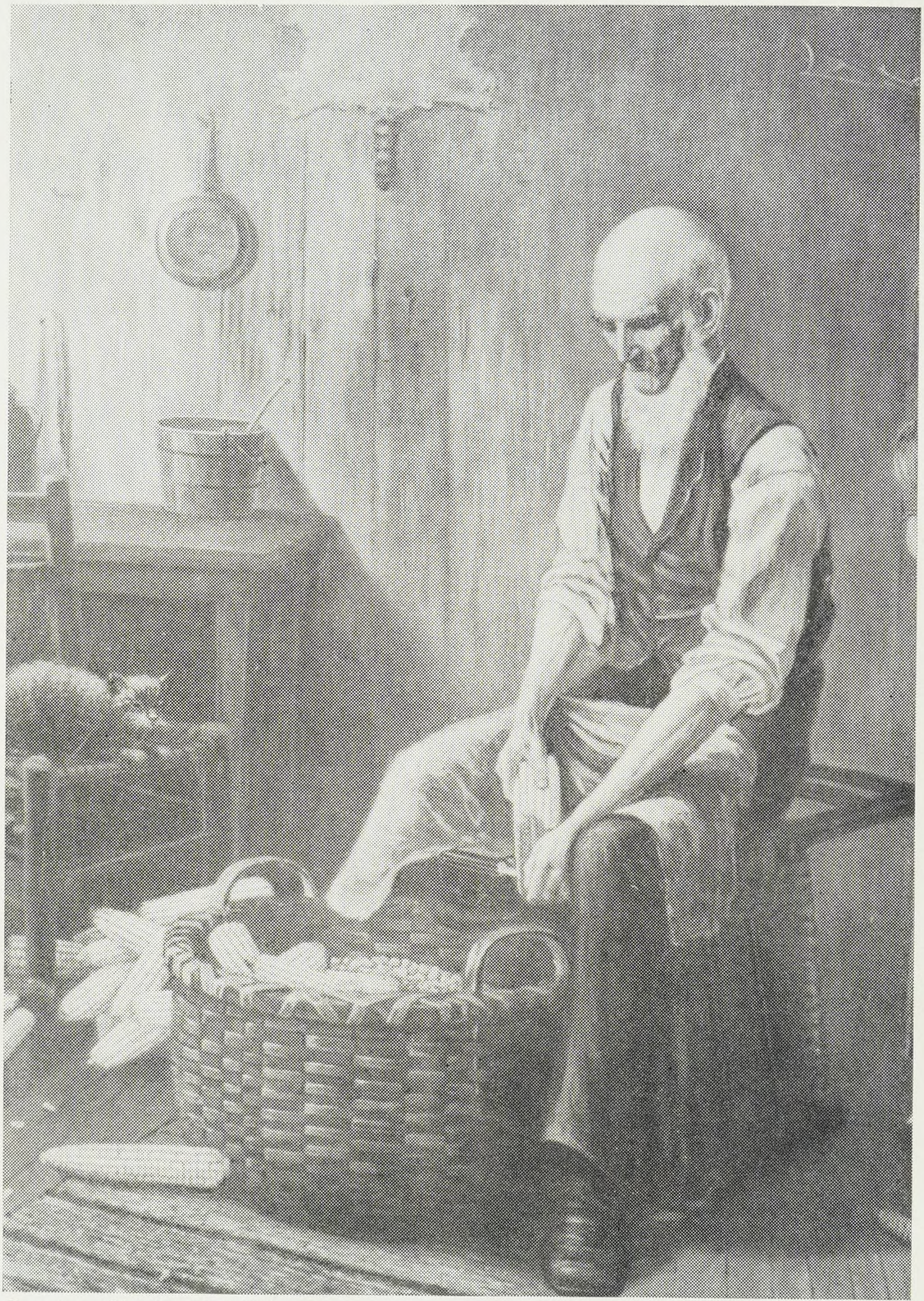

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C. H. Clark

SHELLING CORN

THE PIONEER FARMER AND BACKWOODSMAN

EDWIN C. GUILLET

VOLUME TWO

Toronto THE ONTARIO PUBLISHING CO. LTD.
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CONTENTS

VOLUME II

Chapter I. FARM BUILDINGS AND FENCES 3

Shelters and shanties, 3; Barns and out-buildings, 3–9; Men killed at bees, 6; Root-house and ice-house, 8, 12; The dairy, 8; Springs, pumps, and wells, 8–12; Divining rods, 11–12; The backhouse, 13; Types of fencing, 13 *et seq.;* Brush fence, 13; Hedges, 14, 22; Snake and rail fences, 13–21; Log fence, 16, 20; The fence-viewer, 17; Rail-splitting, 16–20; Kinds of trees used for rails, 16–18; Stump fences, 19; Stone-and-rail, 20–2; Toggle fence, 21; Workman's fence, 21–2; Board and picket fences, 22–3; Wire fencing, 23; farm chores, 23–5; drains and culverts, 24–6; Appearance of early farm clearances, 26–8; Pride in progress, 27–8; Sentimental attraction for the settler's first home, 28

Chapter II. SOWING AND PLANTING 29

Drags and harrows, 29–34, 41; Sowing, 29 *et seq.*; Grubbers and cultivators, 34; Land under improvement, 34 *et seq.*; Crop rotation, 34–8; 'Wheat miners', 36–7; Varieties of wheat, 37–8; Types of ploughs, 38 *et seq.;* Oxen and horses, 38–40; Disappointing crops, 40; Planting corn, 41, 44; Oats, 42, 44; Hours of work, 42; Yield, 40–2; Potatoes, 42–4; Turnips, 44–5; Buckwheat, 45; Peas, 45–6; Flax and hemp, 46; Tobacco, 47; Fertilisers, 47–50; Pastoral agriculture, 50; Marsh hay, 50

Chapter III. HARVESTING THE GRAIN 51

Competition of nature, 51; Other hazards, 51–2; *Chesse,* 51; Caterpillars, 51–2; The sickle, 52; The scythe, 52–3; The cradle, 52–7; Binding the sheaves, 57; Loading and stooking, 58; Thatching and combing, 58–9; Threshing, 59–60; The flail, 59-61; Treading out by cattle, 60; By horse-power, 60, 63; Winnowing, 60–2; Fanning mills, 62; Threshing bee, 63; Flour-milling, 63–5; Smut, 63, 69; Distilleries, 64; Haying by hand, 65; By horse-rake, 66; By hay-sweep, 66; Horse-fork, 66; The dinner horn, 68; The corn crop, 69 *et seq.*; 'Breachy' cattle, 69–70; Racoons, bears, squirrels, and snakes, 70–3; Wild turkeys and wild pigeons, 70–1; Hunting bee, 71–2; Harvesting and husking, 73; Corn cribs, 73–4; Cornmeal, 74; Crop changes, 74

CHAPTER IV. PIONEER STOCK 75

Importance of oxen, 75–7; Other stock, 77 *et seq.*; Hardy, inexpensive stock best at first, 78; 'Browse' as feed, 78–80; Lost cattle, 80–1; Scarcity of milk, 82, 84–5; Pastoral farming defective, 82; Cattle-breeding, 84–5; Low-grade butter, 85; Gradual improvement, 85–7; Renting cows, 86–8; Cheese-making, 89–90; Lack of shelter for cattle, 91–2, 103–4; Winter on the farm, 91–2; Sheep and pigs, 92 *et seq.*; Wolves and dogs a hazard, 93, 100–1; Feed for hogs, 95–6; 'Shingle' pigs, 96; Diseases of stock and primitive treatment, 85, 96; Types of horses, 97–8; Farm chores, 98; Poultry, 98-100; Prices of produce, 101; Importation of improved stock, 101–4; Importance of agricultural societies, 101–2; Early importers, 101–2; Silos, 104; The catallo, 104

CHAPTER V. VEGETABLES AND FRUITS 105

Pits for potatoes, 105–6; Roothouses, 106; Pumpkin products, 106; Scarcity of seeds, 106; 'Carrot shows', 106; Tomatoes early avoided, 108; Early nurserymen, 108–9; Peas and beans, 109; Gardens rare, 109; Hotbeds, 110; Melons and berries, 110; Strawberries, 110–1; Honey, 111–12; Tracing a beehive, 111–2; Orchards, 112–3; Ginseng, 114; Colonel Talbot's farm, 114–16; Contrast with new clearances, 116

CHAPTER VI. LATER PIONEERS 117

'The Queen's Bush' and other northern settlements, 117–8; 'Remittance men', 118 *et seq.*; The Strickland farm school, 119–21; Muskoka settlement, 129–8; Degeneration of settlers, 123-6; Abandonment of farms, 128

CHAPTER VII. AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES AND FAIRS 129

Early agricultural societies and fairs, 129–30; Encouragement of improved stock, 131; Prizes at fairs, 131; Proceedings at meetings, 131; Horseraces, 132; Riots at backwoods fairs, 132; At militia parades, 133; Ploughing matches, 133-5; Fairs' exhibits and sales, 135 *et seq.*; Agricultural Association of Upper Canada and its exhibitions, 136–45; Horticultural societies, 143–5; The Province's best farm, 145; Farmers' clubs and picnics, 146; Farm publications, 146; Adelaide Hoodless and the Women's Institute, 146

CHAPTER VIII. THE EVOLUTION OF FARM MACHINERY 147

The Gallic Stripper, 147; Reaping machines, 147–51; Ploughs and harrows, 149–52; Stumping machines, 152–3; Daniel Massey and farm machinery, 153 *et seq.*; Massey-Harris incorporates small companies, 154; Early importations, 157, 160–5; Field trials, 163; Delivery Day, 165–6

CHAPTER IX. MAKING THINGS FOR THE HOME 167

The Age of Wood, 167; Pump-making, 168-9; Cutting boards, 169–70; Splitting shingles, 170–1; Making furniture, 171–3; Vehicles, implements, and tools, 174–6; Sand and lye as cleaners, 176; One family's enterprise, 176

CHAPTER X. LEATHER WORK 177

Clothes of hides and skins, 177; Tanning leather, 177–9; Lowell Tannery, 179; Making shoes and harness, 179–82; The travelling tinker, 181; Ketchum's Tannery, 181; Itinerant tradesmen, 180–2

CHAPTER XI. SPINNING AND WEAVING INDUSTRIES 183

Shearing and sorting wool, 183; Greasing and carding, 183–4; Spinning, 184–5; Dyeing, 185–6; Weaving, 186–7; Fulling, 187; Making clothes, 188–90; Quilt making, 190; Knitting and embroidery, 190-2; Straw work, 192-3; Rugs and carpets, 193–4; Cultivation of hemp, 194–5; Cultivation of flax, 195–7; Making linen, 197–9

CHAPTER XII. INDUSTRIES ABOUT THE FARM 200

Maple sugar making, 200–4; Lime-burning, 204–6; Charcoal-burning, 206–7; Making soap, 205, 207–10; The potash industry, 210–4; Other forest products, 214

CHAPTER XIII. GRAIN AND ITS PRODUCTS 215

Grinding grain into flour, 215–9; The preparation of yeast, 219–20; Baking bread, 220–3; Preparing wild rice, 223–4; Making starch, 224–5; Distilling and brewing, 225–6

CHAPTER XIV. PREPARING FISH AND GAME 227

Fish recipes, 227–9; Dressing game, 229–32; Wild pigeons, 231–2

CHAPTER XV. FOOD PROCESSES AND RECIPES 233

Making sauerkraut, 233; Apple cider making, 233–4; Making vinegar, 235; Preparation of drugs and remedies, 235–6; Substitutes for tea and coffee, 237; Apple recipes, 238; Preserving small fruits, 238–9; Making grape wine, 239–40

CHAPTER XVI. CATTLE AND THEIR BY-PRODUCTS 241

Hog-killing, 241; Salting meat in barrels, 241; Pickling in brine, 241-3; Making lard and sausages, 243; Making gelatine, 243; Smoking meat, 243–4; Candle-making, 244–8

CHAPTER XVII. DAIRY PRODUCTS 249

Butter-making, 249-50; cheesemaking, 250–5; Cheese factories, 253–5

CHAPTER XVIII. FROM HOME TO FACTORY 257

Specialization in trades, 257 *et seq.*; Philemon Wright's manufactories, 257; Skilled and unskilled workers, 257–61; Growth of factories, 261

CHAPTER XIX. THE REWARD OF TOIL 262

Success and failure, 262 *et seq.*; 'Gentlemen' settlers, 262–4; 'The musical barn', 264; Types of domestic architecture, 265 *et seq.*; Class prejudices, 265–6; Financial success, 266–8; Decline of snobbishness and laziness, 269–9; From poverty to affluence, 269–70; But a difficult transition, 270–1; Enthusiasm over success, 272–4; The pleasures of nature, 275; Misfortune and failure, 277–8; Enthusiasm for democracy, 278 *et seq.*; Bitter memories of the Old Land, 278–80; The clash of social classes, 278–80; Interdependence, 280; Advance and retrogression, 280–2; Mortgaging the farm, 283–4; The sweet smell of success, 284–5

CHAPTER XX. THE MODERN FARMER 286

Information and specialization, 286 *et seq.*; State experimental farms, 286–7; Ontario Agricultural College, 286–7; Pest control, 287; Declining yield on farms, 287; 'Vertical' farming, 287 fn.; Farmers' institutes and co-operatives, 287–8; Women's Institutes, 288; United Farmers of Ontario, 288; The Farm Forum, 288; Emigration 'fevers', 288; Pioneer survival, 289–90; Electrification and other farm progress, 290–2; Social advances, 291–3; Farming still a laborious occupation, 293–4; But with many compensations, 293–4; The force of nostalgia, 294–5

APPENDIX A. THE DIARY OF JOSEPH ABBOTT 297

APPENDIX B. THE LETTERS OF ROBERT STEVENSON 314

APPENDIX C. THE JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN CHARLES GIFFORD 342

BIBLIOGRAPHY 359

INDEX 375

ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME II

PAGE
Shelling Corn (*C. H. Clark*) *frontispiece*
Log Barn, Vaughan Township 4
Cedar Log Fence, Thorah Township 5
Farm Buildings and Wood Yard (*Charles Brown*) 6
Barn-Raising at Woodbridge 7
Frame Farm Buildings near Delhi 9
Artesian Well 9
Mrs. Moodie's Well 11
Captain Hill's Fireplace 11
Ice-Cutting on Hamilton Bay 12
Abandoned Schoolhouse at Sangster 13
Main Street, Picton, 1866 (*G. Ackerman*) 15
The Workman's Fence 17
Pine Stump Fences, Uxbridge Township 19
Stone Fence with Double Stake and Rails 20
Log Drive above Lakefield 22
The Old and New in Fences 23
Log Bridge across the Coldwater (*T. H. Ware*) 24
Culvert on the Coldwater Road (*T. H. Ware*) 26
Stucco Cottage, Holland Landing 27
McKay Home, Walsingham Township 31
Broadcasting Seed by Hand (*T. W. Maclean*) 31
From Corn Patch to Breakfast Table 32
Wheat and Its Products 33
Adam Fergusson 35
Absalom Shade 35
Capt. W. F. Owen 35
Capt. Charles Rubidge 35
Amos McCrea 35
Catharine Traill 35
Stump Fence 40
Chaudière Falls in 1823 (*Henry du Vernet*) 46
Bridge across the Otonabee (*Edwin Whitefield*) 48
Village of Pakenham 48
The Sickle or Reaping Hook (*T. W. Maclean*) 53
Binding Sheaves (*T. W. Maclean*) 53
The Scythe (*T. W. Maclean*) 55
The Cradle (*T. W. Maclean*) 55
Automaton, Self-Raking Reaper 58

Illustrations

PAGE

Wheat Stacks 59
Threshing with the Flail (*T. W. Maclean*) 61
Winnowing the Grain (*T. W. Maclean*) 61
Threshing Outfit near Hampton 64
Fisher's Mill, Dundas (*T. H. Wilkinson*) 65
Hay Scales Receipt, Islington 66
First Sod, Toronto and Nipissing Railway 67
Sawyer Agricultural Works, Hamilton 67
Bush Farm near Chatham (*Philip Bainbrigge*) 69
Slaughtering Wild Pigeons 71
Harvest 72
Stock in the Farm Yard (*Fanny Palmer*) 76
Belleville, Looking East, 1830 (*Thomas Burrowes*) 79
Sale of Short-Horns (*W. Cruickshank*) 83
Fireplace with Bake-Oven 86
William Elstone, Haliburton Trapper 88
Cheese Factory, Glengarry County 89
Interior, Cheese Factory, Glengarry 89
Allen McIntosh 90
A. F. MacLaren 90
Hog-Killing Stand near Queensborough 94
Pig House of Butt Logs 96
Hen Fever, 1864 99
General Store, Paisley, 1867 103
The Dray (*Russell Taber*) 103
Fruit (*Sarah Ann Carter*) 107
Flowers (*Sarah Ann Carter*) 107
Strawberry Picking near Oakville (*W. Cruickshank*) 111
Colonel Talbot's Home (*Mrs. J. G. Simcoe*) 115
Indian Camp, Sturgeon Lake (*Anne Langton*) 115
Haliburton Village, 1864 118
Farmer's Jumper and Gentleman's Carriole 119
Fred DelaFosse 120
Fred Benwell 120
Samuel Strickland Presenting Diplomas 121
Manuscript Newspaper, Lakefield 121
Logging Bee, Muskoka (*James Weston*) 123
Cotton Mill, Hastings, 1863 (*M. A. Farrar*) 125
Dam at Lindsay in the 1860's 125
Preparing for Market (*L. Maurer*) 135
Provincial Ploughing Match (*W. Cruickshank*) 135
Western Fair Grounds, London 137
Horse Ring, Provincial Exhibition, London 138
The Grounds, Provincial Exhibition, Toronto, 1852 139
The Agricultural Hall 139
The Floral Hall 139
Toronto Exhibition Grounds, 1891 140
Central Fair, Hamilton, 1873 141
Lovejoy House, Toronto 142

PAGE
Flower Arrangement (*Harriet Clench*) 144
Fair Day, Gore Bay, Manitoulin 145
Adelaide Hoodless 146
The Gallic Stripper (*T. W. Maclean*) 148
Late Nineteenth Century Sales Appeal (*T. W. Maclean*) 150
Jaunty Implement Advertising (*T. W. Maclean*) 150
Wood's Patent Self Rake Reaper (*T. W. Maclean*) 151
Massey Toronto Light Binder (*T. W. Maclean*) 151
Stump-Pullers, Upper Canada Village 153
Manny's Hand Rake Reaper (*T. W. Maclean*) 155
The Horse-Power (*Russell Taber*) 155
Mower (*T. W. Maclean*) 158
Massey Harvester (*T. W. Maclean*) 158
Patrick Bell's Reaping Machine (*T. W. Maclean*) 159
Hussey's Reaping Machine (*T. W. Maclean*) 159
Horse Rake (*T. W. Maclean*) 160
Marsh Harvester (*T. W. Maclean*) 162
The Blacksmith Shop (*Russell Taber*) 162
A Great Binder Field Trial (*T. W. Maclean*) 163
Harris Open-End Binder (*T. W. Maclean*) 163
Threshing by Horse-Power, Haliburton 165
Maxwell Delivery Day, St. Mary's 165
Kitchen Utensils 168
Colebrook Pump Factory, near Napanee 169
Hand-Made Cradle 172
Stacking Hay by Horse Power 175
Early Cooper Shop, Vanessa 175
Davis Tailor Shop, Little Current 178
Fisher Harness Shop, Gore Bay 178
Making Shoes (*Creigh Collins*) 180
The Travelling Tinker (*John Bolles*) 181
Ketchum's Tannery, Toronto, 1834 181
Spinning and Weaving (*J. E. Laughlin*) 189
The Quilting Bee (*Harold McCrea*) 189
Sampler Worked by Charlotte Payne 191
Flax (*Jerrine Kinton*) 196
Machine for Braking Flax Stalks 197
Flax Mill at Streetsville, 1866 198
Making Maple Sugar 201
Mr. and Mrs. James O'Hara 203
Sugaring-Off, Moira River 203
Soap-Making (*Russell Taber*) 205
Lime-Kilns, Nassagawaya Township 205
Macdonald Foundry, Tiverton 211
Making Soap and Potash (*C. W. Jefferys*) 213
The Old Mill in Winter (*George H. Durrie*) 217
Napanee about 1830 (*Thomas Burrowes*) 218
Indians Gathering Wild Rice 223
Bloor's Brewery, Rosedale (*R. Baigent*) 225

PAGE
Fishing Parties, Burleigh Falls 228
Perry's Creek (*Thomas Workman*) 228
Norfolk County Courthouse (*W. E. Cantelon*) 230
Pope's Shooting Lodge, Vittoria (*W. E. Cantelon*) 230
Shooting Wild Pigeons (*Smith Bennett*) 231
Net for Catching Pigeons (*James P. Cockburn*) 231
Cider Press on the Humber 239
Press-Filling Machine and Meat Grinder 242
Candle-Making Machine (*Anne Langton*) 245
Freeland's Soap and Candle Factory, Toronto 247
Cheese-Making in Ontario (*J. C. Dyer*) 253
Quebec from Point Levi (*James P. Cockburn*) 254
Burns' Blacksmith Shop, Cobourg 256
White's Barber Shop, Gore Bay 256
Cobourg in 1840 (*Philip Bainbrigge*) 258
The Ahrens Pottery, Paris (*Paul Wickson*) 259
Gillard's Blacksmith Shop 259
Dam and Flume, McGowan's Mill 260
Tannery in Omemee 260
Home of Samuel Strickland, Lakefield 263
The Musical Barn, near Warminster 264
Home of the Reverend W. Forster 265
Abandoned Langton Home, Sturgeon Lake 267
Indian Village, Rama, Lake Couchiching (*T. H. Ware*) 268
First Langton House (*Anne Langton*) 271
Langton House in 1837 (*Anne Langton*) 271
Home and Driving-Shed, near Streetsville 272
Mississippi River at Almonte 272
Abandoned Log House near Sutton 275
Deer Lake Church, Haliburton 276
Hinck Stone House 276
'Our Home in the Woods' 277
The Grave of Thomas Carr, Keene 279
Abandoned House, near Thessalon 281
Abandoned House, near Iron Bridge 281
The Ruined Shanty (*Reginald Drayton*) 283
Mortgaging the Homestead (*George Reid*) 283
First Settlement 284
Fifteen Years Later 284
Thirty Years Later 284
Junction House, Cataract (*Chief Beaver*) 289
Georgian House, near Erindale 290
Cylinder Rake-Bar Hay Loader 292
Tractor-Controlled Wide-Disc Harrow 292
Self-Propelled Corn Picker 292
Farm and Fireside 294
Milking (*Russell Taber*) 295
Canning (*Russell Taber*) 295
Neptune Inn, Quebec (*James P. Cockburn*) 317

PAGE
Lachine Rapids 318
'Kingstown Bridge, 1844' 319
The Long Sault (*W. H. Bartlett*) 319
Chisholm Mill, Oakville (*Sir Frederick Verner*) 322
Sarnia Tollgate 323
Webster's Falls, 1860 (*Miss Black*) 325
Prince of Wales at Dundurn Castle, Hamilton 326
Dundurn Castle, Hamilton, 1851 326
Mohawk Chapel, Brantford (*Alice B. Pilant*) 329
Dundas Street, London, 1840 (*James Hamilton*) 331
Dr. William Dunlop 338
Fergus in 1837 341
Rapids near 'The Cedars', River St. Lawrence 345
Cascades of the St. Lawrence (*George Heriot*) 345
Posting on the St. Lawrence (*Coke Smyth*) 345
Half-Way House, Danforth Road 347
Spalding's Inn, Grafton 347
Ferry at the Mouth of the Trent (*Thomas Burrowes*) 348
Albion Hotel, Cobourg (*Frank C. Taylor*) 349
Between Cobourg and York, 1830 (*James P. Cockburn*) 350
Winter Scene, Frenchman's Bay, 1864 351
Gibraltar Point, 1837 (*Anna Jameson*) 352
Mouth of the Humber, 1837 (*Anna Jameson*) 353
Mohawk Village, Brantford (*Mrs. J. G. Simcoe*) 354
Rescue of the Crew of the *Pacific*, 1861 (*John Howard*) 372
'Old Union Jack' (*R. R. Osgoode*) 372
'Winter Scene near Toronto' 373
Peterborough from White's Tavern (*Anne Langton*) 373
Canoe Journey, 1837 (*Anna Jameson*) 373

THE PIONEER FARMER AND BACKWOODSMAN

We have no landlord to come at Michaelmas to say 'I want my rent!' No poor rates to pay: we are in a free country. It is a pretty thing to stand at one's own door and see a hundred acres of land of his own.

— Letter of Robert Slade, *Quarterly Review*, September 1835.

CHAPTER I

FARM BUILDINGS AND FENCES

ONLY when he had cleared a little land and erected his log hut was the settler in a position to give much thought to farm buildings and fences. Subsequent land clearing and fencing often went hand in hand, allowing, of course, a few days' interval between the burning and fence construction.

It was often remarked by travellers into the backwoods that the barns were bigger and better than the houses. Within a year or two, perhaps, a large barn 40 feet by 50 might be seen close by the log shanty* in which the family still lived. If the barn's projected size was too large for log construction, boards were used, perhaps laboriously cut by whip-saw and trimmed by handsaw. In any event it was usual to have a good barn before an improved house was erected; in fact it was considered a reflection on the inhabitant if he did otherwise. But few could build one immediately.

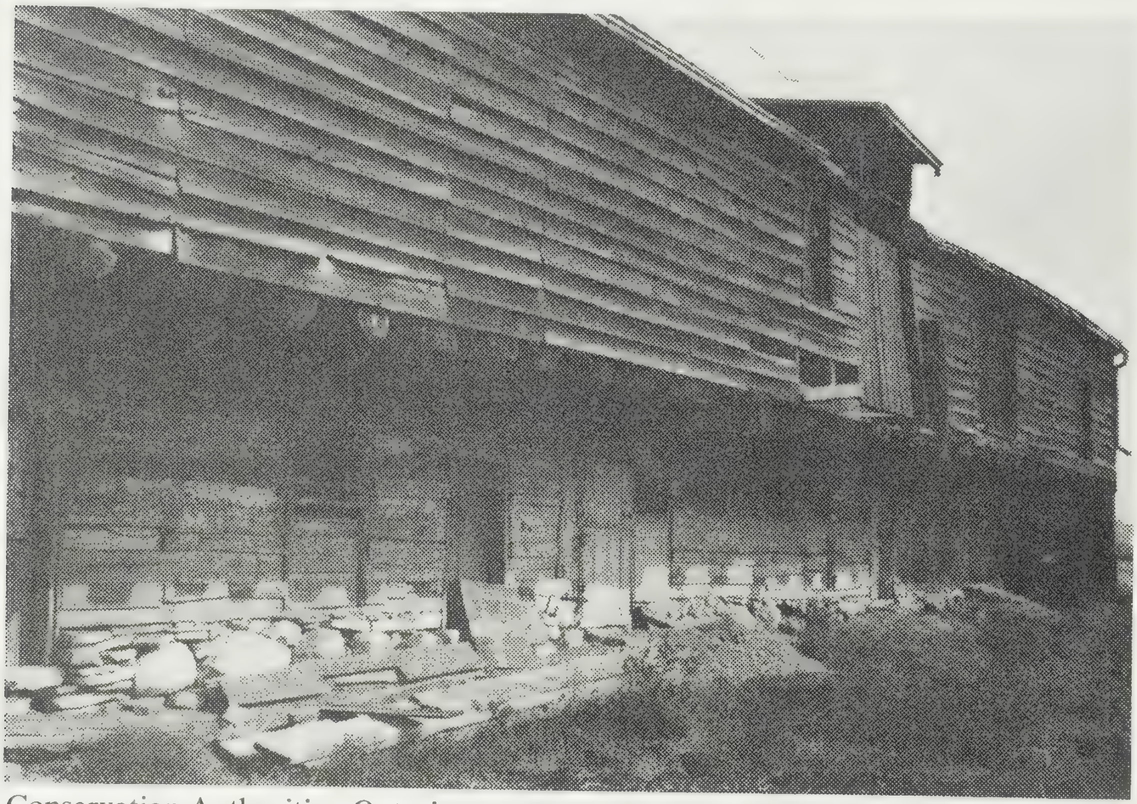
> If you have not time, or at the moment are not prepared to build a barn [says 'Ex-Settler'] put up some kind of a rough edifice wherein to store your straw and Indian corn, which may afterwards be converted into a cattle-house or something else of use; and you will find having such ready by the time harvest has come a very serious convenience, for you will then be well hurried to get all out in time and wheat put in.

When something of a more permanent nature became practicable, the choice—if local conditions permitted any choice—was between log and frame. Most settlers put up a rough log

*The shanty was by no means the most primitive pioneer home. John and Miriam Culver and their three small children reached Norfolk County in the winter of 1793-4, having chopped their way through the brush-entangled forest. The ground was snow-covered, but clearing a spot on what is now lot 1 of the 11th concession of Townsend they built a shelter of pine boughs and cow-hides at the trunk of a huge fallen tree, and there Miriam and her babies cuddled together on a bed of pine boughs until John could 'rig up' something better.

structure with the aid of their neighbours, but those with funds might hire men to do the job for $50 to $60, if log, or three or four times that for a frame structure. 'Ex-Settler' preferred spending the extra money on land clearance, and there was a special type of log barn that he recommended:

> I would erect two log buildings, twenty-five feet by twenty or twenty feet square, with a space of nine or ten feet between them, and when they were run up nine or ten feet connect over that, cover all under the one roof, and make the gates to inclose the opens: the middle walls of logs then, which would else form partitions, are nearly cut away. The corn is drawn off the field and piled in each end, and the center space is the threshing floor, for in Canada corn is not stacked in the farm yards (or rather haggards) as here, but at once drawn into the barn—the dear rates of labour and the heavy falls of snow in the winter are, I suppose, the reasons for this. It is well not to stuff and plaister too closely the interstices between the logs, as one seeks to do in a house, for air is very necessary in a barn, and overlooking this has possibly given rise to some of the objections against log-barns. As for their duration, I have lived in a house of logs built twenty-five years and it looked likely to last as many more.

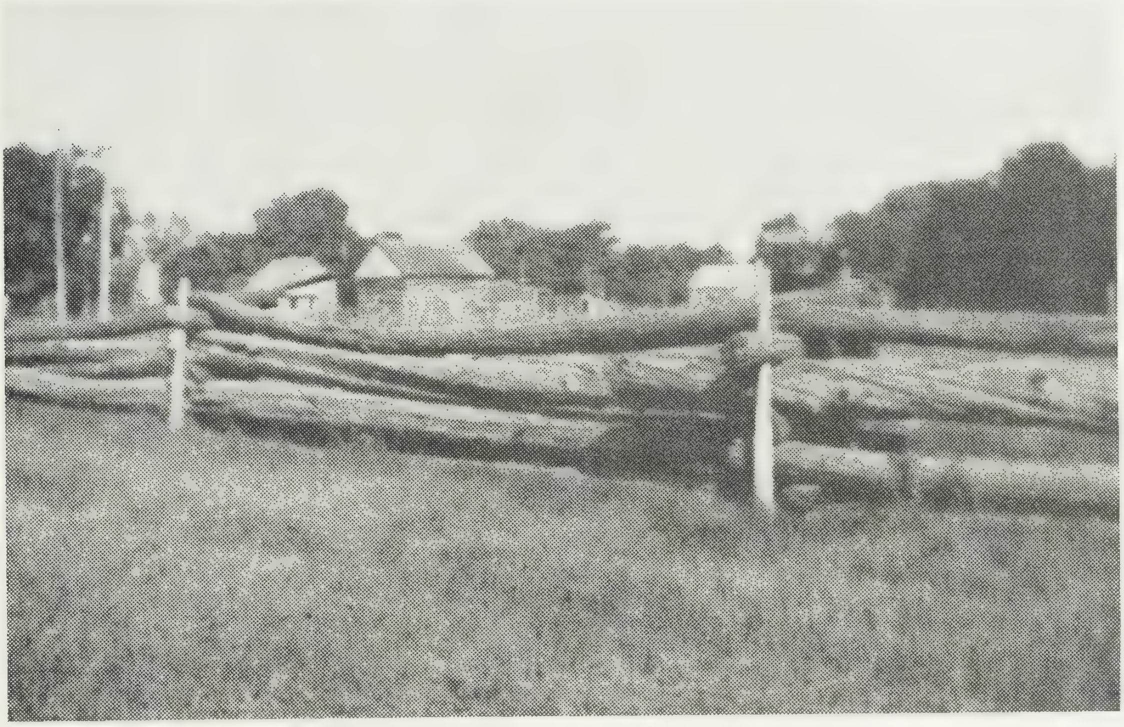


Conservation Authorities, Ontario

LOG BARN, VAUGHAN TOWNSHIP, ERECTED 1810-12

The same experienced settler had many good ideas on the frame barn and its best location and arrangement for subsequent convenience:

Frame barns are built in two different ways: in one the frame work is principally perpendicular, and the boards sheeting it are nailed on parallel to the horizon in the manner frame-houses are built; this description costs seven or eight pounds more than the other, in which the frame-work is chiefly parallel and the boards are put on perpendicularly. I prefer the latter—it is the most airy and I should think the sheeting would not decay so soon, being perfectly upright. When building your barn—as it will be long before your clearing is completed—you must consider its position with regard to your future farm; the more central it is, of course, the better, as far as the nature of the ground permits. The back gates will open in your cattle yard so that the straw may at once be thrown to them, and on the outside at the back and gable ends you can have their sheds—this yard I would have inclosed with a fine substantial log-fence, it looks so solid and comfortable and affords such shelter—and take care to have in it a warm house for my milch cows in winter, and another adjoining to the yard for my workmen.



Courtesy George M. Douglas

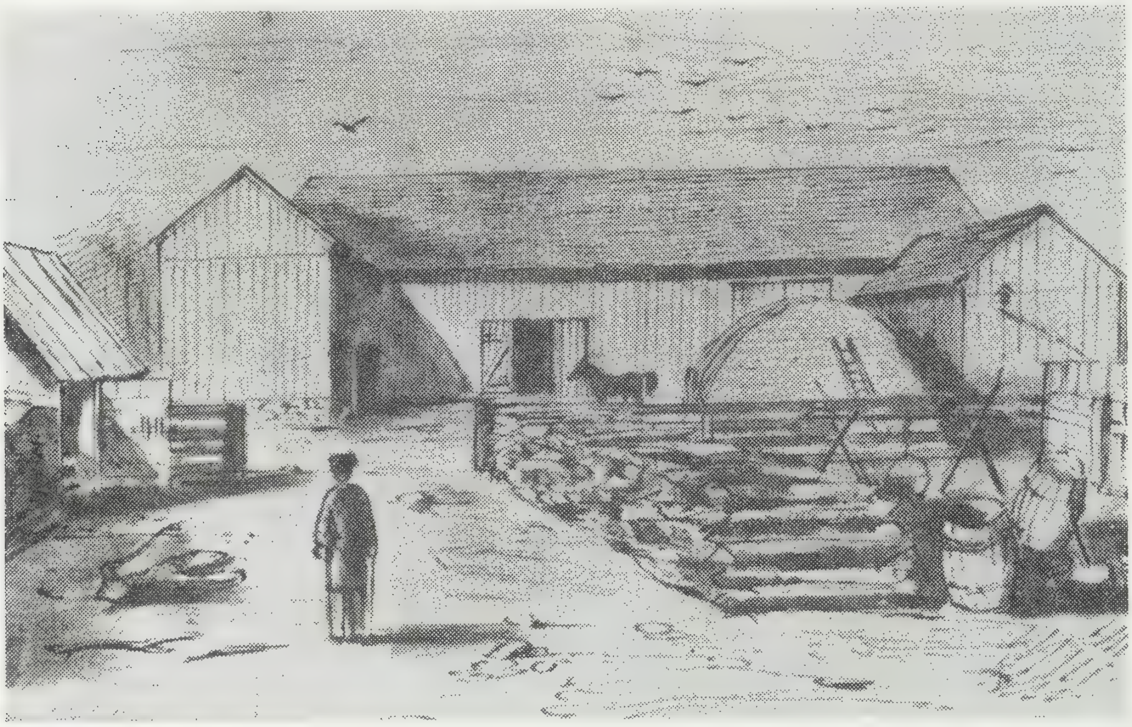
CEDAR LOG FENCE, THORAH TOWNSHIP

A small crosspiece between the upper two logs has two holes into which are fitted two uprights to give strong support on both sides of this type of log or rail fence.

I have heard of many of the Bush settlers building their barns on the highest spot in their clearance—I cannot tell why. I would seek the lowest, that my road to it might be as much down-hill as possible, taking care the place was perfectly dry; of course you must have a well fenced-in road from your barn to the Bush, at which side you think it best to turn out your cattle, that they may have free ingress and egress.

The raising of a barn, as of a house, was usually effected by holding a bee. Captain John Thomson's diary describes a raising in Medonte Township, near Orillia, that had a most unfortunate aftermath:

> *Saturday, April 19th, 1834.*—Sent off two hands to raise the country to come on Tuesday to get up the frame of the barn. . . .
>
> *Monday, 21st.*—Very rainy. Poor prospects for tomorrow's work; two hands at the village bringing over a supply of whisky, etc., the other two making the pike poles for raising the frame, cleaning and preparing the shanty for the accommodation of the people coming from a distance. . . .



Courtesy Caroline Brown — Charles Davy Brown

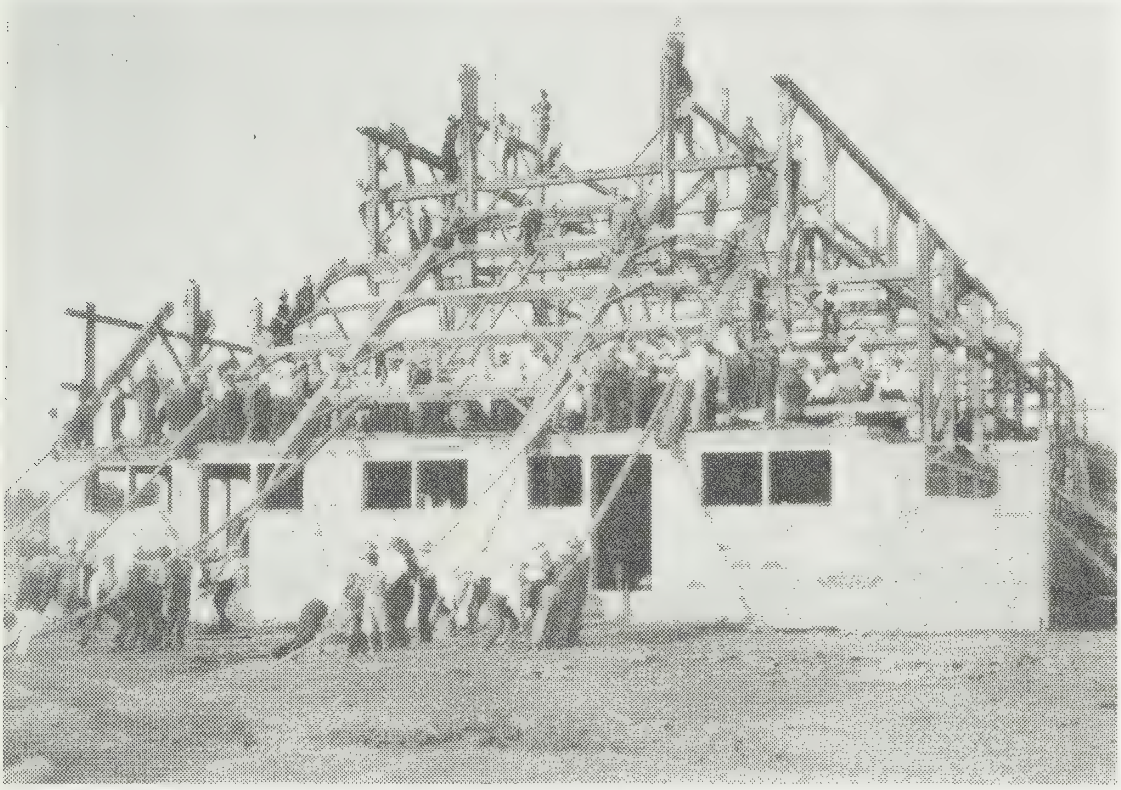
FARM BUILDINGS AND WOOD YARD NEAR GALT, 1857

Due to heavy rain the bee lasted three days, and during a 'half playful wrestling scuffle' a man was killed. An inquest 'found a verdict of manslaughter against R. McDonald'. During the raising a barrel of pork, one of flour, and fifteen gallons of whiskey were used up. One of the hands made a coffin for the dead man, and McDonald was soon sent to Toronto for trial.*

---

*The death of Joseph St. German could hardly have been ignored, but so many disputes and fights occurred at bees that magistrates sometimes avoided trouble by making themselves hard to find. 'When I became a magistrate', said Squire George Munro, 'I used to go away to the woods when I heard there was a fight at a bee, and keep away till the blood cooled down, and that generally ended the matter.' (C. O. Ermatinger, *The Talbot Regime,* p. 102.) See Appendix A, page 302, for another instance of a man killed in a quarrel at a bee.

The Magrath improved barn at Springfield (Erindale), erected shortly after their house, was undoubtedly exceptional in many respects. Its dimensions were 60 feet by 36 by 18 in height, with storage space above and icehouse, roothouse, and 'summer dairy' beneath. The *framer* was paid $12, the only cost except 2s. 10d. for nails*—unless the expenditure for dinner, supper, and 'a little music' for the bee is included. What made the structure remarkable was that the floor was supported by 23 beams each 18 inches square; and over them were placed two courses of 3-inch planks, the second row covering the joints of the first—a necessity, for the timber was green and would warp. It was less costly to use timber on this grand scale, Magrath found, than to draw it to mill and get it cut. For the roof two of his sons cut 18,000 shingles, and the entire structure was a credit to a highly enterprising and ingenious family.**



Motion Picture Bureau, Ontario

BARN-RAISING AT WOODBRIDGE

The average settler, however, had no such house or barn—certainly not for many years, and often only after a lifetime of toil. But as season succeeded season progress was usually made and various refinements added to the original plant.

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*Cut nails, shingle nails, and wrought nails are referred to in Thomas Forster's Account Book (Toronto Public Library).

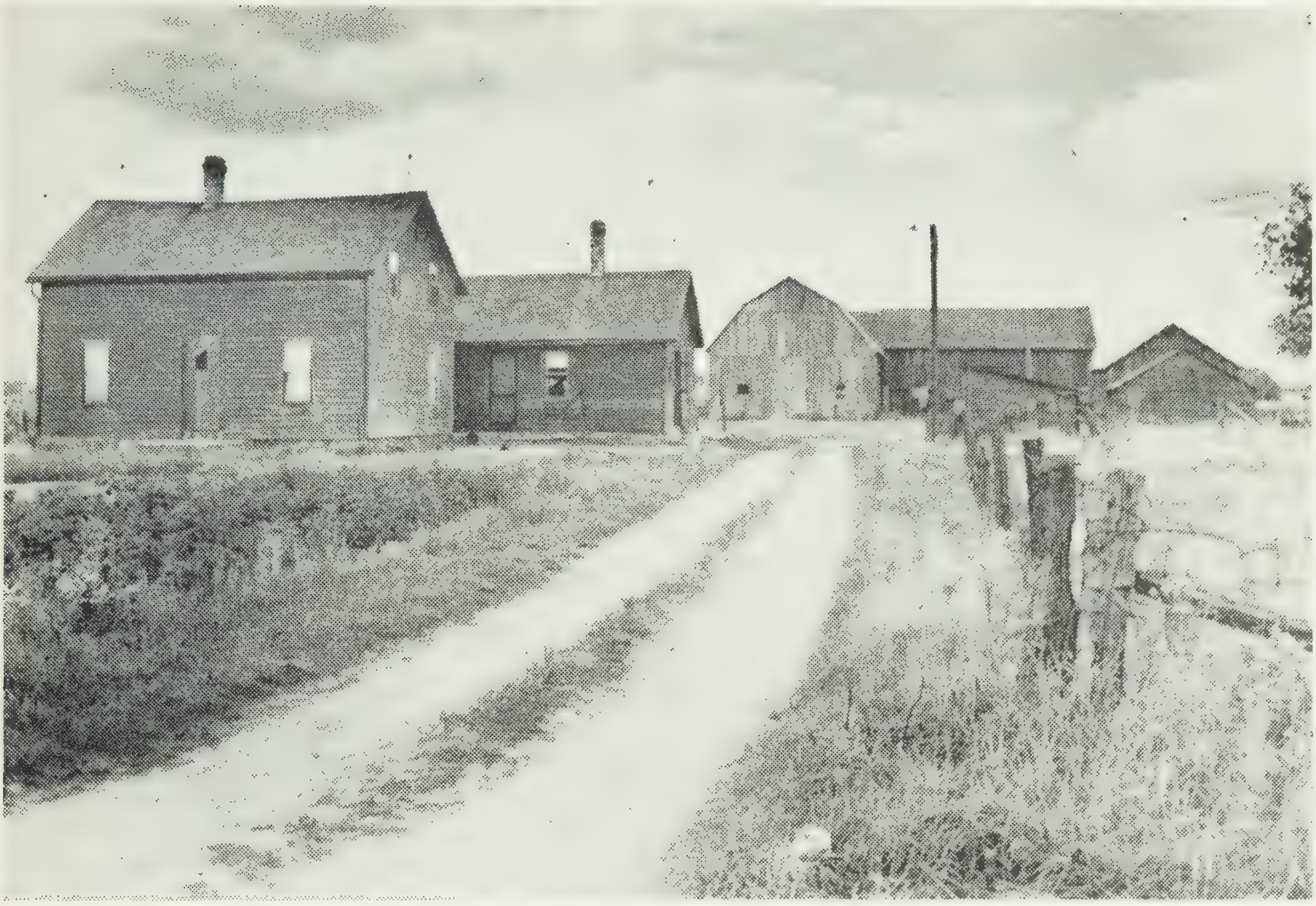
**See Thomas Radcliff and Thomas W. Magrath: *Authentic Letters from Upper Canada* (Dublin, 1833), of which a new edition was published in Toronto in 1953.

> At the back of your house in the kitchen-yard [writes 'Ex-Settler' with notable attention to detail] you will have your root house and your ice house; and do not as most people do—seek out a bank, probably at a most inconvenient distance, and excavate a great hole in it, thinking every thing is accomplished if they be under ground. Build yours quite close to your kitchen on the ground of logs, and cover them with two feet of clay—thus made they are much drier, much less expensive, and easier of access. If you wish much storage for vegetables two root houses of a small size are much preferable and easier to build than a very large one; these houses, of course, must have double doors and straw put between them for the perfect exclusion of air.
>
> Root houses or cellars are absolutely necessary to keep during winter a portion of vegetables for present consumption; but for your own domestic purposes, that is for your family and your workmen, storage for two or three weeks' consumption is quite sufficient, for all bulky vegetables, such as turnips, cabbages (with roots uppermost), potatoes, &c., keep well in pits properly covered, and you will always find soft days to get them brought in. If you have turnips or mangel wurzel or such food for cattle you will have a root-house for them adjoining their own yard, and pits also. But root-houses and cellars you will find useful for many other purposes, for in them only can things be kept cool in summer and unfrozen in winter: and store-rooms to be of much use during the extreme of either season must be some such air-impervious place. Dairies are usually built over running water, and I should think these are only preferable in the temperate months. All these, underground or earth-covered, should be made of cedar logs, for they are most durable.

Mrs. Traill, in describing how indispensable a roothouse was for a pioneer family's comfort, answered her own question as to why every settler did not have one without delay:

> Now this is exactly what every newcomer says; but he has to learn the difficulty there is at first of getting these matters accomplished, unless, indeed, he have (which is not often the case) the command of plenty of ready money and can afford to employ extra workmen. Labour is so expensive and the working season so short that many useful and convenient buildings are left to a future time; and a cellar, which one man can excavate in two days if he work well, is made to answer the purpose till the season of leisure arrives or necessity obliges the root-house to be made. We are ourselves proof of this very sort of unwilling procrastination, but the logs are now cut for the root-house and we shall have one early in the spring. I would, however, recommend any one that could possibly do so at first to build a root-house without delay, and also to have a well dug; the springs lying very few feet below the surface renders this neither laborious nor very expensive.

Streams and springs at first provided fresh water, but in their absence a hole was sometimes dug in a marsh, and a four-foot



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

FRAME FARM BUILDINGS, NEAR DELHI

It is apparent that the lightning-rod salesman had called.

Conservation Authorities, Ontario

ARTESIAN WELL

On lot 14, concession IV, Pickering Township.

hollow log placed in it to give, at least, the appearance of greater cleanliness to the water. This arrangement usually eliminated frogs and 'wigglers', but some settlers had no objection to swamp water direct from the marsh, though they usually sifted out the wigglers with a piece of calico.

There were districts, of course, where the nearest creek, river, or swamp was several miles off, and where no water could be struck even after boring fifty feet. If successful, the pioneer well-digger usually *curbed* or roofed over his excavation with poles and rough boards, leaving a double door as entrance; and earth or sod covered all except the entrance, through which a wooden bucket was lowered by a rope.

> I have known wells [wrote J. J. E. Linton, early settled near Stratford] built up square with logs, but this may be done *above* where the water rises to; from the surface of the water and *under*, stone should be used.*

The pump was a much later development, and it came first to the towns. M. G. Scherck's *Pen Pictures of Early Pioneer Life in Upper Canada* gives the best description of the old wells and the first pumps, with references to divining rods and other lore appropriate to the subject:

> Before the days of the pump, and even since if the water was close to the surface, a well, say ten or twelve feet deep, was dug in the ground and lined with stone. A curbing or box arrangement was put around the top to prevent any one from falling in. A pole, with a crook at one end for hanging the pail on, was used for pressing the pail down into the water and then drawing it up. Deep wells had a rope and windlass, with a heavy pail, usually left hanging to the rope, for drawing up the water. This is the kind of well which has been immortalized by that old song, 'The Old Oaken Bucket that Hangs in the Well'.
>
> Another kind of well was generally called a 'sweep'. A post with a crotch in the top was placed near the well. In this swung a pole with one end much heavier than the other; the light or upper end had a pole attached to it long enough to reach down into the well. On the end of this was placed the bucket, which, after being filled, was lifted by the weight of the heavy end of the pole which extended over the top of the post.
>
> Most of these wells, although still to be seen in remote places, have been supplanted by the more modern pump. The first pump to be used was the sucker pump. This was made by boring a hole lengthwise through a tamarack or pine log. A rod ran down through

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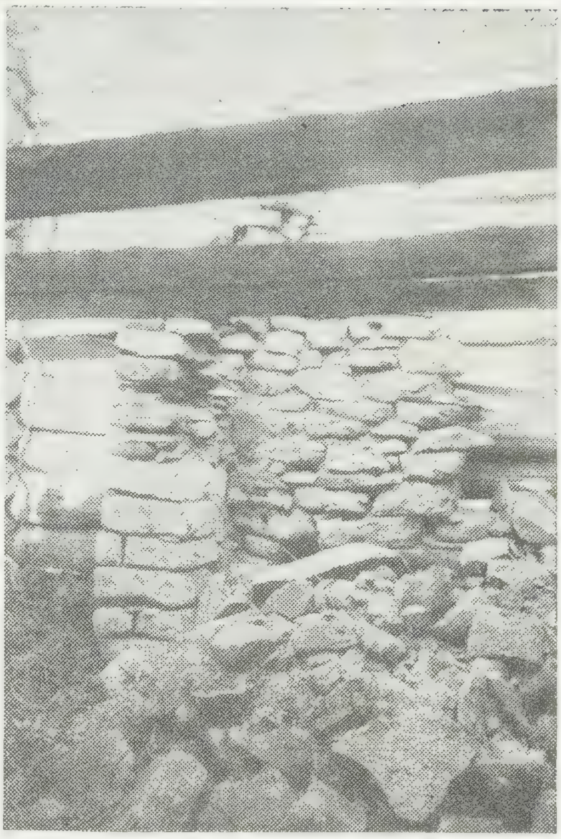
*This rare booklet, published in England in 1850, bears the quaint title *The Life of a Backwoodsman; or Particulars of the Emigrant's Situation in Settling on the Wild Land of Canada.*

Courtesy George M. Douglas

MRS. MOODIE'S WELL
Near Lakefield.



CAPTAIN HILL'S FIREPLACE
Dummer Township.

this, at the lower end of which was a sucker made of leather in which was a valve which opened as the pump handle was raised and allowed the water to flow through, and closed as the handle was lowered, bringing the water up. Another kind of pump which is very common in some localities is the chain pump. It is not as ancient a pump as the sucker pump. A chain runs down and up through a pipe, and as the crank is turned the buttons, placed here and there along the chain, bring the water up.

In connection with wells it might not be out-of-place to mention the 'divining rod', which was used—and is still used in some places —for locating a place to dig a well. Whether there is any real virtue in it is a question, although there are intelligent people even now who have great faith in its efficacy. In the opinion of the writer it is one of the myths which future developments in science and psychology will explain away. The operator, or 'dowser', with a forked stick made of witch hazel, holding a prong in each hand and with the crotch pointing upwards, walks over the ground until he reaches a point where water is to be found, when the crotch turns in his hand and points downwards. A recent paper states that in parts of Pennsylvania, where the practice was quite common and in consequence of which many wells were dug in out-of-the-way places on the farm, it has been entirely abandoned, as water can be found just as well without it.

Excepting the process of logging, more farmers lost their lives in wells than in any other farm activity. In some districts men were poisoned by deadly gases as they descended to complete or repair wells, but a greater number were drowned or buried alive when ropes broke or became tangled, or when the curbing gave way, particularly in sandy or gravelly terrain. James B. Scott (1868-1941) of Maple Grove, near Brantford, was among the last of the tamarack pump-makers, and James Gribben, who is still living, long had something more than a local reputation as a diviner. Modern pumps are of iron, and gasoline motors have been succeeded by electricity to provide power. In the more favoured regions farmhouses now have running water, bathtubs,* and toilets, either chemical or with septic tanks, so that the once vast difference between urban and rural housing has now almost disappeared.

The icehouse, needed particularly for milk and butter, became useful for preserving fish for winter use. When separate from the barn it was commonly placed in the shade, but with plenty of ventilation. If the sawdust-covered ice was expected to last for summer use a minimum of 200 blocks was considered essential, but much more was often stored. Cutting and hauling ice is among the heaviest types of work, but in later years particularly it was not uncommon for farmers who had a convenient source of supply to fill an icehouse each winter.

Head of the Lakes Historical Society

ICE-CUTTING ON HAMILTON BAY

Among the outhouses which were frequently arrayed in not too attractive symmetry around the farmhouse was usually a 'backhouse', though from an entry in the Abbott diary we are led to infer that its erection was often, like many another convenience, put off until the settler 'got around to it':

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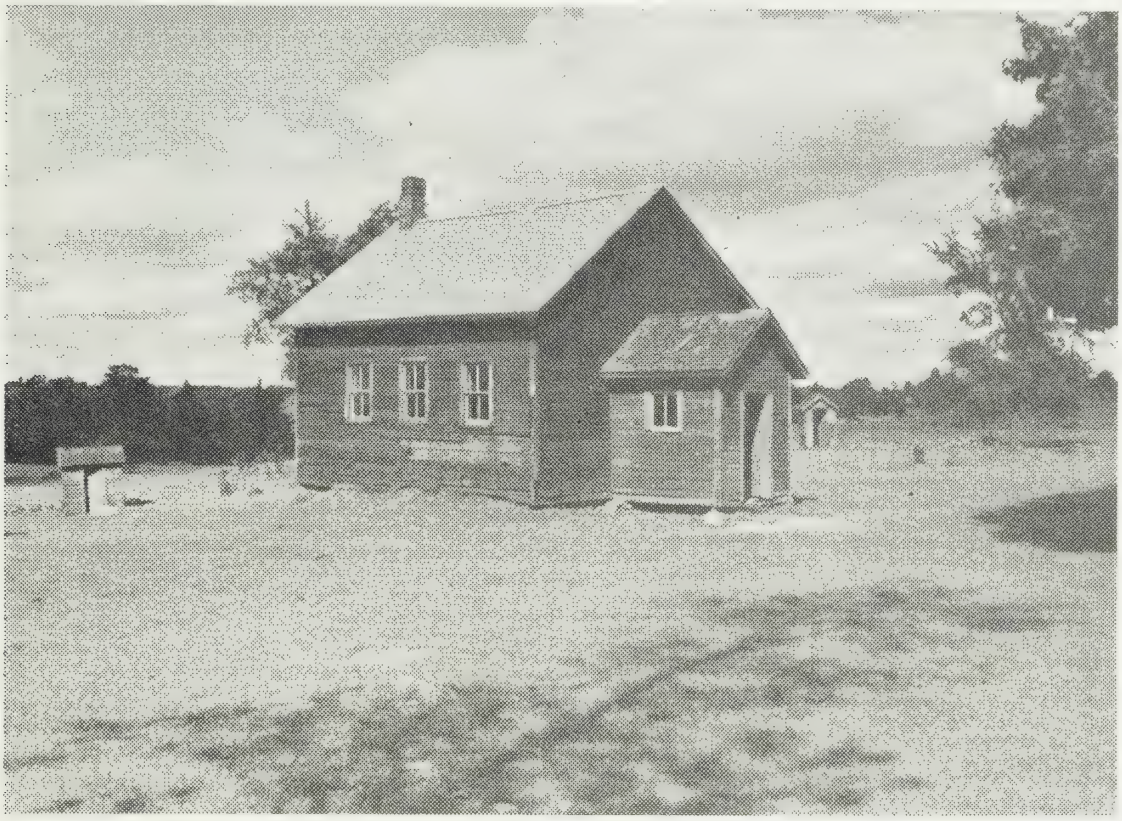
*Putting an end to the jokes of a century as to the farmer's Saturday night bath by the kitchen stove.

> *June 15th.*—Put up a small building behind my garden, which, although not always to be found on a farmstead in this country, is not on that account the less *necessary.**



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

ABANDONED SCHOOLHOUSE AT SANGSTER

Fencing of some type, perhaps merely brush, logs, or rails from one tree trunk to another, or old shanty boards nailed to stumps, or small trees with their tops cut off, was usually erected in conjunction with clearing, long before the various appendages and refinements we have described could be constructed. It did not take the Englishman long to compare the new scene with the old, to urge that the hedgerows of Old England replace the 'snake' or 'worm' fences of Upper Canada.

> You cannot conceive [one man wrote home] the singularly cold and dreary appearance of the whole country from the want of

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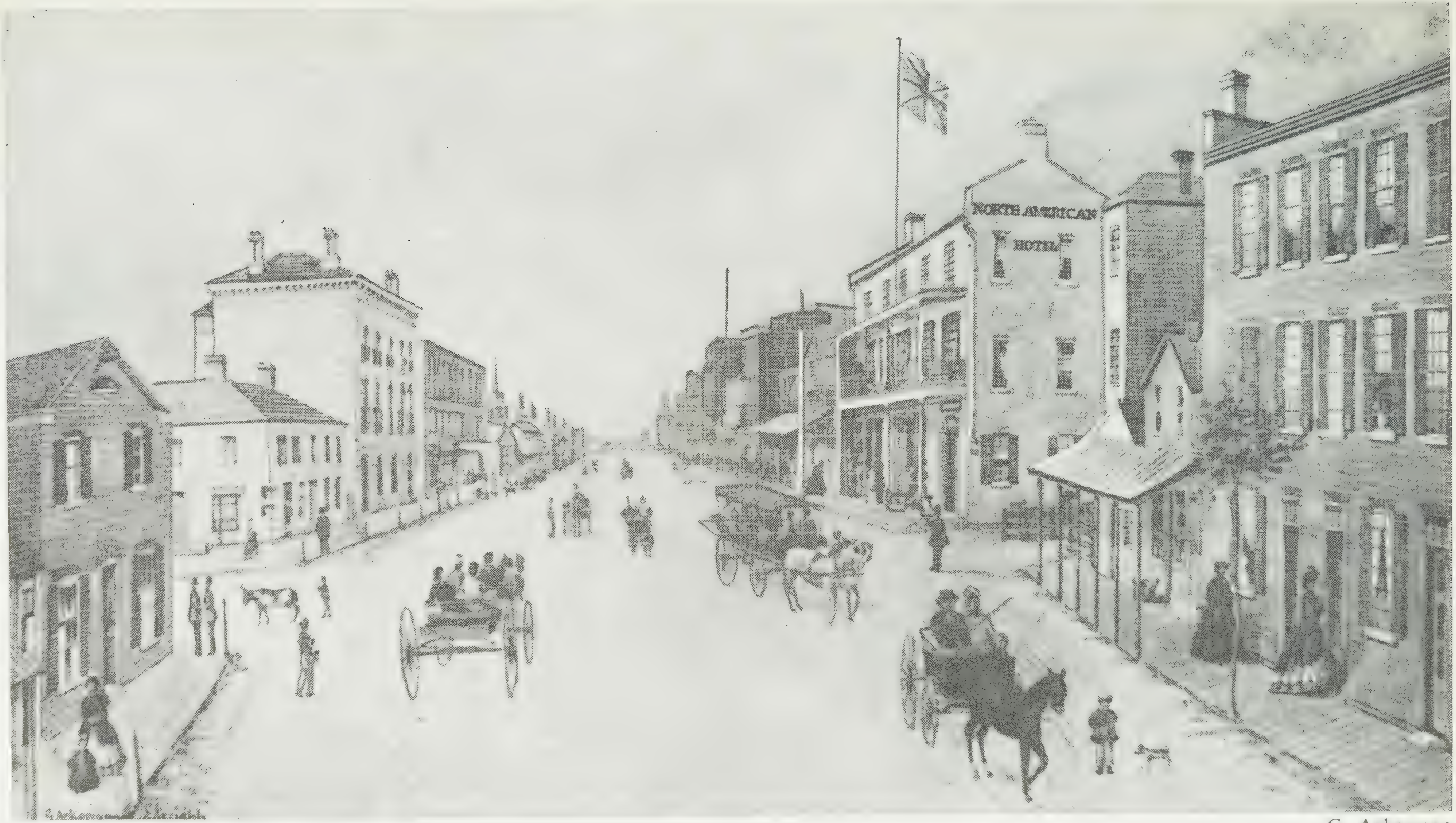
*In Virginia they were early called *necessary houses,* in Ontario privies, outhouses, or backhouses, to mention only the more genteel names. The home of Alpheus Jones, Prescott, had one with accommodation for seven, and Professor Anthony Adamson, who has located, among many other variations, a two-storey privy in Hamilton, says that a historical article could be written on the subject.

> hedgerows and clumps of trees for shade, shelter, and ornament around the homesteads. You may travel hundreds of miles and nothing meets the eye but the interminable snake-fences.
>
> With the early settlers every tree was a weed of gigantic growth. 'Down with it!' was the universal motto. Many persons have wasted and burnt timber to the value of the fee-simple of their estate. . . .
>
> The answer I invariably got during my early acquaintance with Upper Canada: 'Oh, sir, the hedges won't grow, our winters are so severe.' But there is also another reason—they are too lazy to try! There are plenty of plants growing at their very doors: the English thorn thrives with moderate care; the beech would form an impervious hedge in three years; the buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*) grows with great rapidity and has the advantage of forming a very thick hedge, and one which, from its medicinal properties, the cattle will not nibble at.
>
> Upper Canadian farmers are constantly abusing the climate of Lower Canada, but in the neighbourhood of Quebec there are luxuriant hedgerows for miles round and beautiful clumps of trees of every variety.

Catharine Traill did something about it, both in the matter of hedges and of less offensive fences:

> We are having the garden, which hitherto has been nothing but a square enclosure for vegetables, laid out in a prettier form; two half circular wings sweep off from the entrance to each side of the house; the fence is a sort of rude basket or hurdle-work, such as you see at home called by the country folk wattled fence: this forms a much more picturesque fence than those usually put up of split timber.
>
> Along this little enclosure I have begun planting a sort of flowery hedge with some of the native shrubs that abound in our woods and lake-shores. Among those already introduced are two species of shrubbery honeysuckle, white and rose-blossomed; these are called by the American botanists *zylostium ciliata.* Then I have the white *spiraea frutex*, which grows profusely on the lake-shore; the Canadian wild rose; the red-flowering raspberry (*rubus spectabilis*), leather-wood (*dircas*), called American mezereon or moosewood —this is a very pretty and at the same time useful shrub, the bark being used by farmers as a substitute for cord in tying sacks, etc. (the Indians sew their birch-bark baskets with it occasionally). Wild gooseberry, red and black currants, with here and there a standard hawthorn—the native tree bearing nice red fruit I named before—are all I have as yet been able to introduce. The stoup is up, and I have just planted hops at the base of the pillars. I have got two bearing shoots of a purple wild grape from the island near us, which I long to see in fruit.

Francis Evans outlines in his *Emigrant's Director and Guide* the construction of the primitive fencing that usually followed the burning:



Courtesy Picton Public Library

G. Ackerman

MAIN STREET, PICTON, 1866

In his youth Sir John Macdonald had his law office on the second floor of the building at the extreme left.

In clearing land suitable timber may be selected for fencing, and drawn or carried to the places where such enclosures are to be made; but they should not be erected before the fire is past or it may burn them down again. Various methods of fencing are resorted to, but if the place cleared be surrounded on all sides by the woods a row of trees felled one after the other, with such additions as may be requisite, will be a sufficient temporary fence. When clearings join the road or other clearings a more regular fence will be requisite, which is generally constructed on new lands with logs cut twelve or fourteen feet long and about a foot or more thick. They are laid up thus: the largest are laid next the ground, lapping about a foot of each end, side by side; some put a cross block under the lapped ends of the logs to raise them from the ground; on this row of logs is placed another, with cross blocks under their ends as under the first, and with notches in the blocks for the end of the logs to lie in; and by again laying on this another row of smaller logs, as before, the fence is completed, three rows high being generally sufficient if the logs of which they are composed be large. Some drive two stakes by each side of every length of the logs to cross at the top, on which they place long heavy poles to render the fence firm and strong. Others again lay up what is called a zig-zag fence, which they construct with poles and find to answer very well: but the former will stand fifteen or twenty years and is very firm.

The settler may, as soon as he has got his land cleared, please himself by a choice of the many sorts of fencing used in the country; and as good and firm ones are so very necessary to preserve the fruits of the farmer's labour he will do well to have his land sufficiently secured that way in order to guard against trespassers which would in a short time ruin the prospects of a crop if it were left at their mercy.

M. G. Scherck gives some of the details of rail-fence construction and the woods and tools used:

When clearing off their land the settlers, to keep out the cattle, would temporarily build fences of brush, stumps, or logs. They would chop down trees so that they fell in a line. Around these they would pile brush; when they were ready to build a rail fence they would set fire to the brush fence and burn it up. . . .

The tools used were the axe, maul or beetle, and wedges, both iron and wooden.* The timber chiefly used for this purpose was cedar, oak, ash, chestnut, although other woods, as basswood, elm, hickory, and even walnut, were sometimes made use of. The old rail fences, if properly taken care of, lasted many years.

In later years a rail fence was a very expensive fence to build. At one time it was reckoned that it cost sixty dollars to fence off an acre of ground. The usual length of the rails was eleven or twelve

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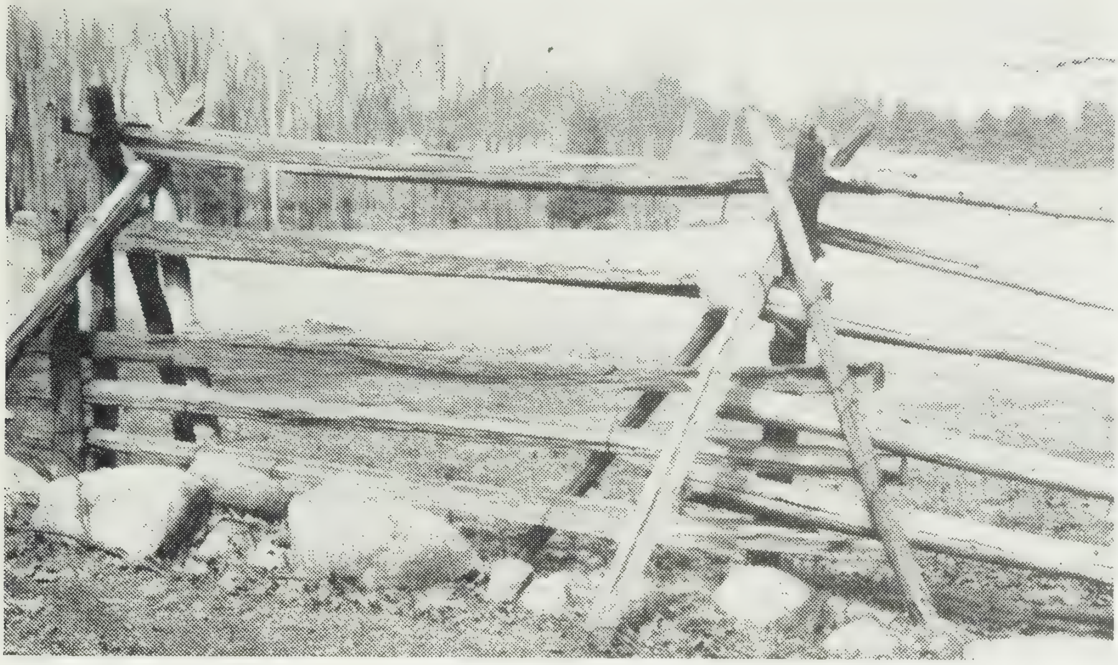
*There were rail-splitters and super-rail-splitters. One of the latter was Jo Kitchen of Norfolk County, who once cut 700 in a forenoon; but the average for run-of-the-mill splitters was probably less than one-sixth that number per day. An expert could get 80 rails from a large log.



Courtesy George M. Douglas

THE WORKMAN'S FENCE
A common type since 1900.

feet. Two lengths of eleven-foot rails when laid were said to make a rod of fence. It served as a measure for the land, however, and was very convenient for the farmer when putting in his crops.

The fences were generally eight or nine rails high (seven or eight feet), the municipal by-laws as a rule requiring a certain height. In fact one of the municipal offices at one time was that of fence-viewer. The rail placed above where the stakes were crossed was called the 'rider'.

'Ex-Settler' gives the most detailed description of the varied forms which the snake or rail fence took, the height necessary for approval by the fence-viewer, and the log fence that he thought much preferable for bush farms:

Having your land chopped and cleared, your attention turns to your fence, of which there are several kinds in America; the most common is the snake fence, which is made of rails roughly split out of the log, twelve feet long and about four or five inches square, piled zigzag and presenting to a bird's eye-view the form of a serpent's body in motion. This fence must consist at the least of seven rails in height, and be six feet high to entitle you to damages in case strange cattle break through into your fields. The best rails are of cedar and black ash, which will last from fifteen to twenty years, and then red oak and pine, which stand ten or fifteen; the worst, and usually the easiest to split, are of basswood, which do not last much over five years; they are also the lightest (except cedar); if you happen to use them have all the bark stripped off them, for it considerably hastens their decay.

A man ought to split at least one hundred in the day. If you prefer contracting for them they should be done for seven dollars per thousand—basswood somewhat cheaper; and remember to have a written agreement specifying the species of wood, the strength and length of the rails, the contiguity of the place where they were to be split, the time in which they were to be done, and the price. I have seen some rails so done by contract that they were not worth piling into a fence or, as it is termed, 'laying', being either so dozed or so shook with numerous cross splits that on raising one end of them they would nearly fall in two. Your oxen haul them to the place they are required, and laying them costs about a dollar a thousand. I do not know how many it takes to fence round an acre, but I would suppose about three hundred; to fence round a ten-acre field takes about two thousand; but seven rails high is not generally a sufficient fence; eight or nine and a 'rider' on top is the least one you may trust to with certainty.*

In laying them the thinnest should be placed lowest and the thickest on top, in order to have it impervious to pigs and more solid. But to a 'bush' settler a rail fence is not the one I would recommend—a fence made of logs cut twenty feet long and piled five high is much preferable. In it the logs are not laid zig-zag, resting on one another as rails are, but are laid straight, the ends passing each other about a foot, on which a small bit of wood is placed and notched in to form a foundation for the next tier. The bottom log all along may be as heavy as you please, and the others gradually diminishing; this fence looks and is by far the most solid, and particularly becomes the forest. The logs consumed in it also save some trouble in the clearing, and the expense of laying is not much, for three men, a yoke of oxen, and a driver ought to lay ten chains in a day. If you intend adopting it you will take care to have the trees that are straightest, most lasting, and nearest to the boundaries of your chopping cut to the right length for it.

There are several other forms of fence in the country which, when arrived, you can observe as opportunity offers, but these are the only two it is necessary at present to describe.

Samuel Strickland refers in his book to a farm which was almost entirely fenced with split walnut rails. 'It really seems a pity', he adds, 'that such precious material like this should be used for such purposes as fencing.' But even that beautiful cabinet wood, red cedar, was so durable that it was popular for fence posts. Apart from the wood used, fancy fences were sometimes attempted, but it was speedily found that the time expended could be much more profitably employed elsewhere on the farm.

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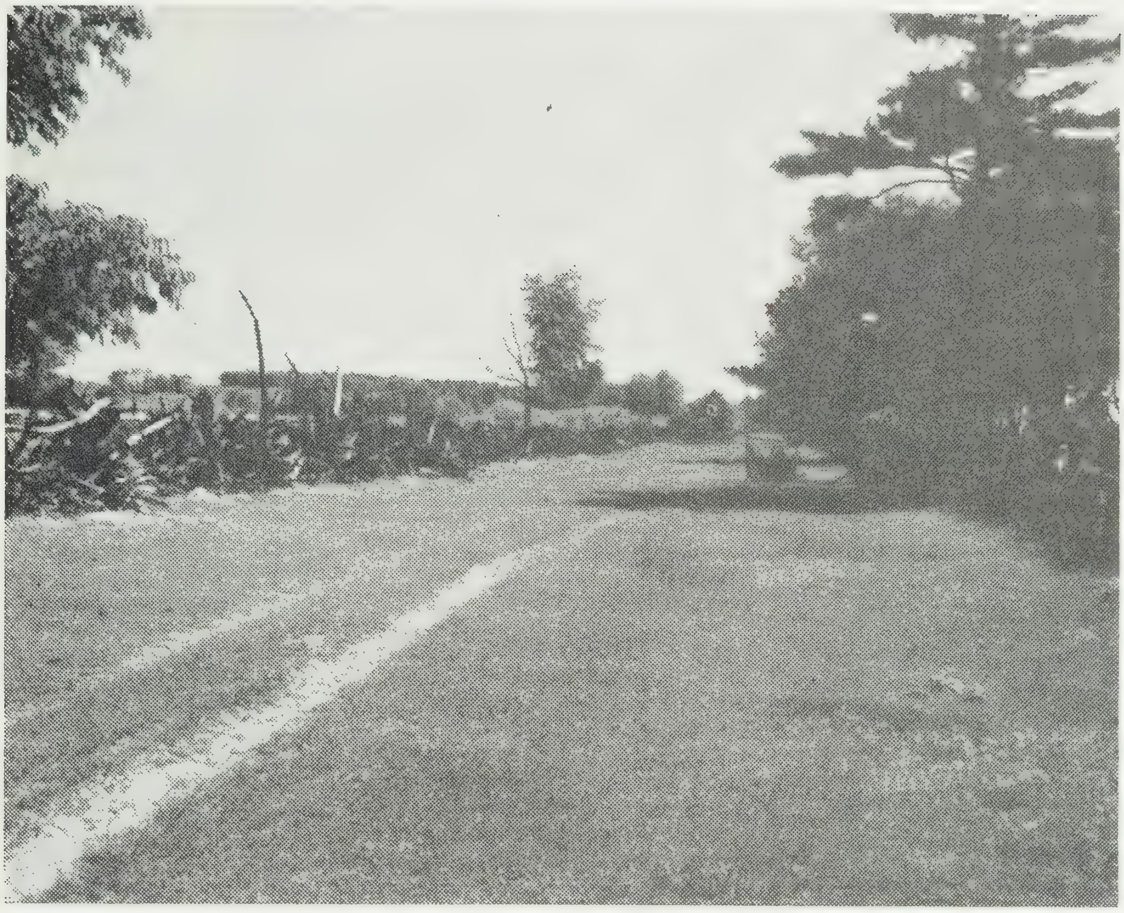
*There were numerous variations in length of rails, height, distance between the two top rails (often left wide to enable people to crawl through), the angles of the uprights, and other details. Books have been written on types of North American fences.



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

PINE STUMP FENCES, UXBRIDGE TOWNSHIP
This pleasant rural road is on lot 16, concession IV.

The stump fences still frequently seen in Ontario are of much later construction, representing the labour of a stumping bee many years after settlement, and in general not longer than seventy or eighty years ago. Wire fencing, similarly, was never found in the pioneer period, though it began to be available in the eighteen-fifties and -sixties. 'Great hopes entertained from Wire Fences in the West', says a guidebook of 1867; but the author of it observed that the type was found wanting on trial, for cattle would run against it at night and break it down. Instead some farmers tried hedges, and others ditches with turf-sod facing, as often used in the Old Country, though the cost of labour was too great where large sections had to be enclosed, as in the Canadian West.

Entries in the Abbott diary indicate what must have been the usual course of events in fence construction: the division of labour in cutting the trees, hauling, splitting, and the erection or mending of the fences which are still common in some parts of Ontario—the 'post-and-rail' fences—and a combination of these with a couple of feet of stone wall which he calls 'decidedly the best fence that can be made':

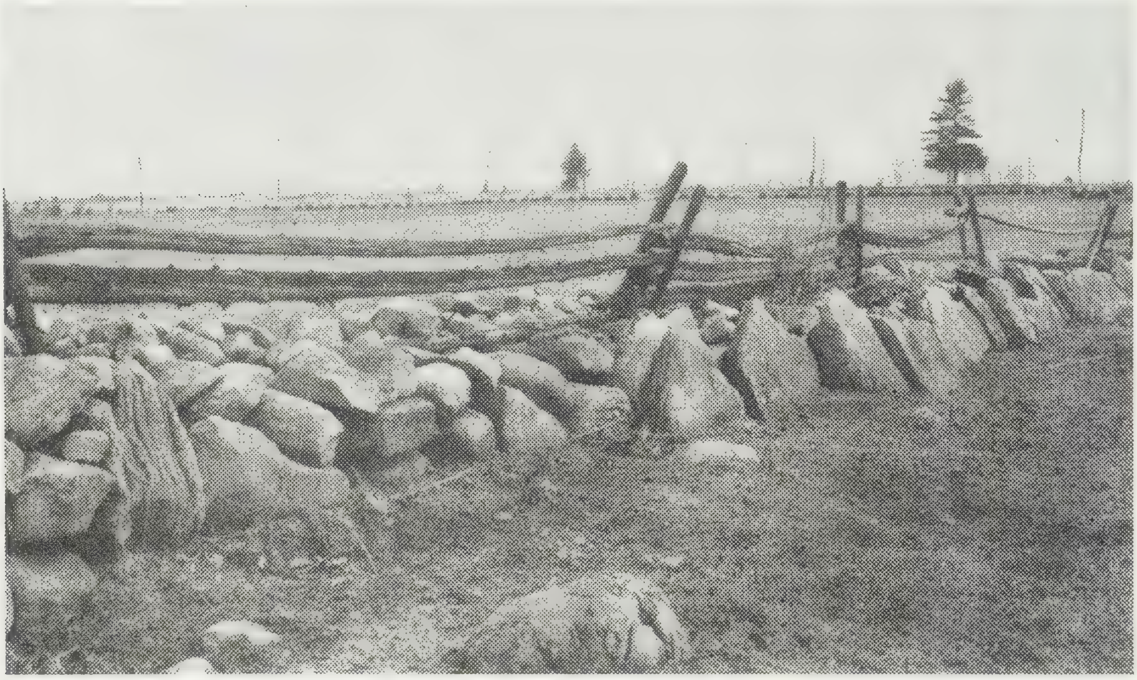
June 7th.—All hands cutting timber for making new fences and mending old ones.

June 8th.—Hauling out of the bush with oxen the timber cut yesterday, and my two men cutting more.

June 9th.—Same work. This ought all to have been done in the winter on the snow, and I have taken care ever since to have it done thus.

June 10th.—Still drawing fencing timber with oxen, but my men splitting it into rails, making blocks, pickets or stakes, &c.

June 11th.—Mending fences round my pasture and on each side of a public road intersecting my farm a short distance from the front of my house.



Courtesy George M. Douglas

STONE FENCE WITH DOUBLE STAKE AND RAILS

June 12th.—Making a small portion of new fence to prolong the line or division fence between me and my next neighbour, beyond my little new clearing into the edge of a thickly wooded swamp—as all swamps are in this country—all, at least, that I have seen. This was what is called a log fence, such as is generally first made after clearing the land; as many of the smaller logs supply its material, hence its name. In after years others of various descriptions are substituted. In Western Canada [*i.e.*, western Upper Canada] seven or eight small rails about twelve feet long are piled up with their ends across each other at something more than a right angle, but we in this part of the country,* and good farmers every where, prefer a post and rail fence, not, however, such as is made in Eng-

*Joseph Abbott farmed first at St. Andrews, Lower Canada, and then lived at Grenville, across the Ottawa River from Hawkesbury.

> land. The post is half of a cedar log of about ten inches diameter and six feet four inches long, with five holes 3½ inches square cut through it with a narrow axe called a post-axe—something like the felling-axe at home but neither so long nor so heavy—and the rails are spliced in the holes, not on the top of each other but side by side, and both the posts and rails are split or 'riven', if the latter word, which is excluded from our vocabulary, may be used. The posts are put into holes about two feet deep. But when stones abound in the land and have to be carted off, they are made into a rude wall about two feet high, in which case two rails can be dispensed with and the posts need not be so long, as they do not require to be put so deep into the ground owing to the support they derive from the broad-bottomed stone wall. This is decidedly the best fence that can be made.

One of the later 'pioneers', Fred DelaFosse, describes in his *English Bloods* a fence he helped build in Muskoka. Part of it might be called a hodge-podge, but the rest was of a type locally named *toggle*:

> It was a very peculiar-looking affair when it was finished. . . . Part of it was made of poles stretched on cross-pieces driven into the ground, another portion of it was what was called a toggle fence, and the remainder was made up of a confused heap of brushwood and stumps. For the benefit of the uninitiated it may be stated that a toggle fence is composed of logs overlapping enough to allow of a block of wood being placed across the ends. These blocks are backed in deep enough to allow of the other logs being rested on them, and thus the fence is raised tier by tier to the requisite height. It was easy enough to roll the bottom logs into place, but when it came to lifting them into the different tiers it was a pretty heavy undertaking.

The remains may occasionally be seen of these almost century-old cedar-log fences, which were especially popular in level-lying limestone regions where rail fences could not be depended upon to resist strong winds. The logs were laid on short cross-pieces or *bunks* set alternately, and the type of fence was found especially in the flat limestone country near Lakefield, east of Lake Simcoe, south of the Talbot River, and in the neighbourhood of Carleton Place.

Where stones had to be removed from the fields the combined stone-and-rail fence described by Abbott was very common. After the stone had been built up some three feet, two or three rails were laid above between small double stakes, overlapping a little so that their ends rested upon one another. Elsewhere this type without the stones tended to supersede the old snake fence, until it in turn was replaced by the Workman's Fence which became popular in the eighteen-nineties. All of the later rail fences are much lower, only about half the height of the early type, which not only kept cattle out more effectively but met local regulations.

Very common since 1900, the Workman's Fence took up almost as much space as the snake or zig-zag, but was stronger than any of its predecessors as well as more economical of wood. Instead of the double stakes there are four, crossing one another at such an angle that they could be wired together and to the uppermost rail of the fence, and extending a few inches beyond. Some five or six rails were laid in the usual manner, and the fence was strengthened by wiring several of them to one or other of the four angular uprights. This fence is still the most common in many of the more outlying townships, and particularly for forest and pasture land. Where large boulders are available they often add weight and stability when placed at the junction of the four uprights.*

LOG DRIVE ABOVE LAKEFIELD, 1903

'Northcote', the home of George M. Douglas, in the background.

The later history of fencing is a continual progress towards wire. At various periods farmers tried hedges—willow, thorn, cedar, osage orange, and others—but they were winter killed or otherwise unsuccessful. Boards or pickets sometimes re-

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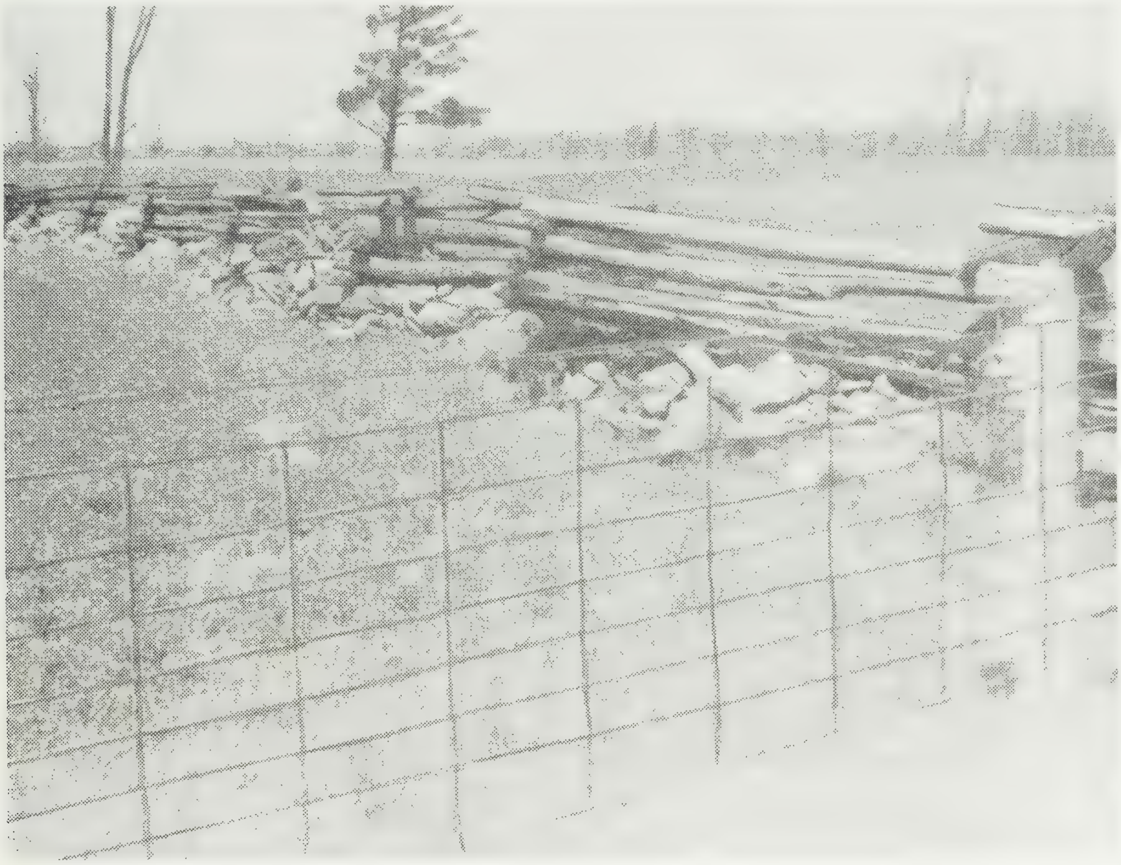
*For much of this information, and for photographs of fence types, I am indebted to George M. Douglas of 'Northcote', Lakefield.

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

placed the rail fence for gardens or other small enclosures, but barbed and other types of wire characterised the more prosperous farms along the front by 1880. In towns in the older-settled regions the more 'elegant' homes sometimes had gardens surrounded by stone walls, mainly to keep out cattle and pigs which were usually allowed to roam the streets.

All sorts of work, and from early morning to late at night, was the average farmer's lot. T. W. Magrath describes the innumerable odd jobs about the farm that he undertook in spare time. For ornament and to conceal farm buildings he planted 3000 trees, many of them evergreens, 'cut an acre of rye before dinner', and made wagons, sleighs, and harrows. His hands, once soft, delicate, and ladylike, were no longer so, but in Upper Canada, he said, people were generally considered lazy if they didn't do manual work.



Photograph by the Author

THE OLD AND NEW IN FENCES

> When I am not superintending the emigrant settlements [he concludes] my time at home is occupied in shoeing horses, making gates, fences, chimney pieces, and furniture. . . . I made an ivory tooth for a very nice girl, and an iron one for the harrow within the same day.

A selection of entries from the Abbott diary gives in graphic form the innumerable *chores* which were part of every farmer's life, the changing tasks as one season gave way to the next, some extra chopping and clearing during 'the fine weather called the Indian Summer', and the succession of work upon drains,* implements, crops, and stock:

June 24th.—An old rotten wooden conduit to convey a little run of water across my road having broken in, we took it all out and replaced it with a permanent stone one.

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LOG BRIDGE ACROSS THE COLDWATER, 1844

June 25th and 26th.—Finishing our bridge across the road.

June 28th.—Commenced hoeing potatoes; found them hardly large enough to hill up, and consequently gave up this work at night in order to allow them a few days more.

June 29th.—Making fences and a drain from the sink at the back door.

June 30th.—Finished our drain with great satisfaction, as it did away with a nasty dirty mudhole; hoeing Indian corn the second time.

July 1st.—Hoeing potatoes, which we found had increased in size wonderfully since Monday.

July 2d. and 3d.—Same work, with an extra hand in order to finish before haying, which, however, we did not quite accomplish.

July 4th.—Sunday.

July 5th.—Wet day; ground scythes and hung them.

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*Perhaps the most detailed research on farm drainage in an early settlement has been made by Charles S. Buck, London. His unpublished typescript is entitled 'Old Sparta and Its Neighbours'.

July 6th.—Commenced mowing.

July 15th.—Finished haying without a drop of rain—very hot.

July 16th.—A fearful thunder-storm—burned a log-barn in the neighbourhood, or, as some suppose, the accident happened from a man going into it with a lighted pipe, to prevent which has been a great source of trouble to me whenever I have employed Canadian labourers; killed another fat calf.

July 17th.—Finished off my hay-stacks.

July 18th.—Sunday. To church; clergyman absent at a distant settlement—prayers, and a sermon read by the schoolmaster; weather quite cool, as is usual after a violent thunder-storm.

July 19th.—Commenced hoeing corn the third time, or rather cutting up with the hoe whatever weeds had grown since the last hoeing; sold 200 lbs. butter at 8d. per lb.; cut first cucumber. . . .

November 20th.—Searching in the woods for a tree with a proper turn near the root to make a pair of runners for an ox sled; found one but it proved unsound at the heart, which we did not discover till we got it home, when we had to go after another; this took Richard and me all day; Charles putting stables to right.

November 21st.—First snow—took in all the cattle.

November 22d.—A thaw and wet day; threshing more grain for the hogs—sent it to the mill.

November 23d. to 30th.—Ploughing again one day; clearing—killed a sheep—hard frost again, but fine weather called the Indian Summer, with a slight smoky haziness in the atmosphere, through which the sun is seen with a deadened lustre—something like a full moon.

December 1st to 4th.—Indian Summer continues; clearing and chopping.

December 5th.—Killed my hogs.

December 6th.—Fall of snow; threshing—cutting up and salting pork.

December 7th.—Drawing wood home for fuel, in the log, with the horses and oxen, not being snow enough to draw it on the sled.

December 8th and 9th.—Made an ox sled—cutting firewood.

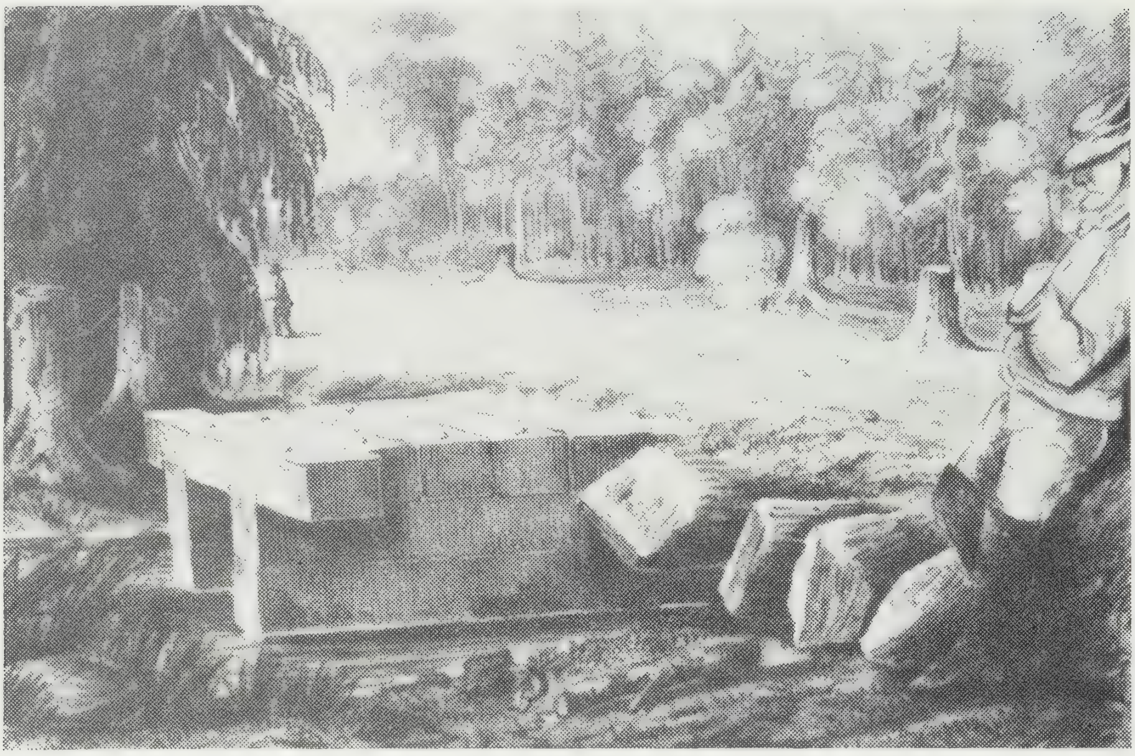
December 10th and 11th.—Drawing firewood, as on the 7th.

December 13th.—Snow storm—threshing.

December 14th.—Drawing in stack of corn-stalks to give to the cattle instead of hay, which I cannot yet get at in my barns, it being covered with grain, and not wishing to cut into my hay-stack till I should have room enough to take it all in at once.

December 15th.—Commenced cutting down the trees on the land I had underbrushed, and chopping them into lengths for piling.

An early type of drain, especially on roads, was made by laying down two logs parallel, about 18 inches apart, while a third log, large and round, overlaid the other two, forming the drain's covering. Such culverts often stood well above the roadbed, a severe test of vehicles' springs and travellers' spines. The finer



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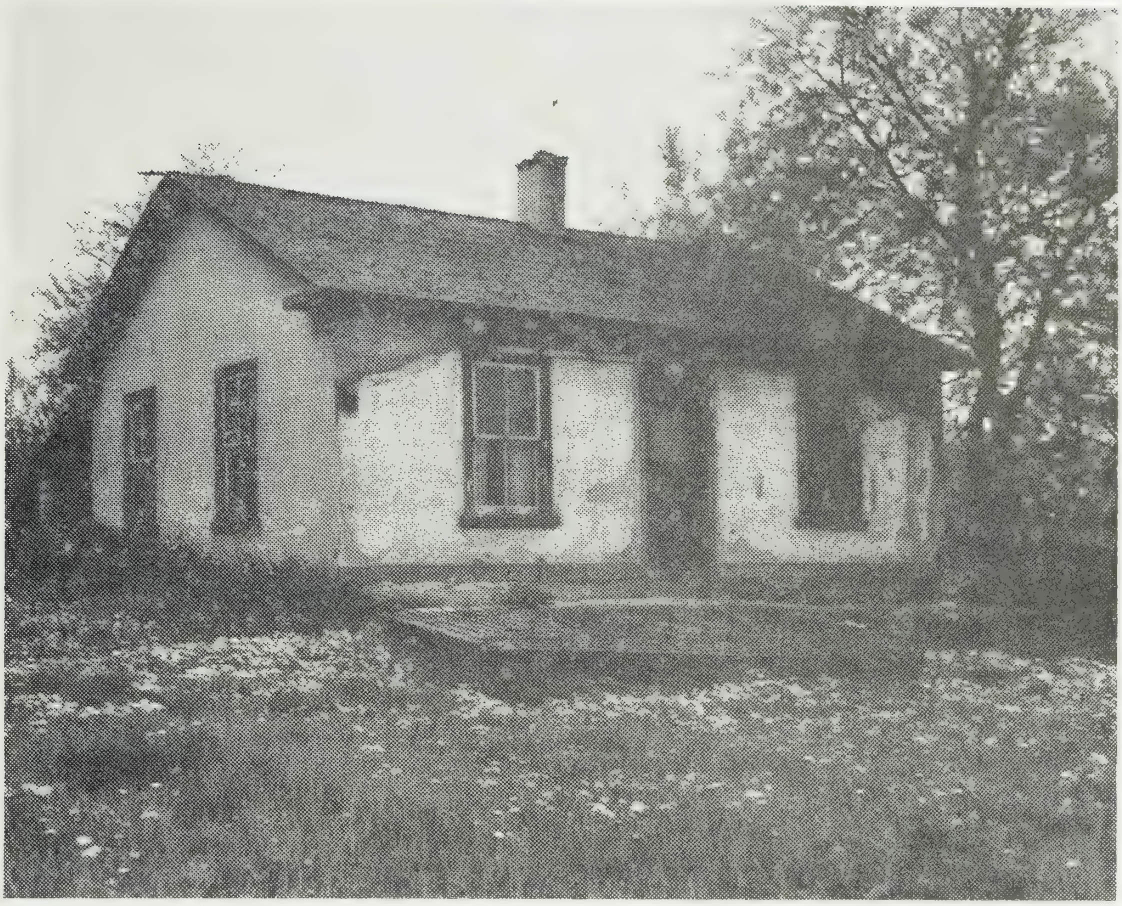
CULVERT ON THE COLDWATER ROAD, 1844

points of drainage resulted largely from government aid. Until the 'eighties almost any type was unusual, except 'clearing-up furrows' to carry off some field water. Even in the 'sixties and 'seventies, however, some farms had hemlock scoops, pine-rail or cedar-rail drains, or stones. Tile became usual in later years. The Ontario Drainage Act of 1872 helped with the reclamation of wet lands, while the Act of 1878 facilitated loans to farmers which enabled them to spread the cost over twenty years. Such improvements in drainage and fencing, with the erection of improved brick homes and great barns, silos and metal windmills, soon gave Ontario farms a 'modern' appearance that has been gradually intensified by electric power, the telephone, the tractor, and television aerials.

A recapitulation of land-clearing, fence-building, the construction of farm buildings, and the commencement of crops will be of value in summarizing the general course of farm improvement. A fine description of farm clearance in all the usual stages of development is given by Dr. James Beaven in his *Recreations of a Long Vacation*. The time was 1845, and the locality between Brantford and London, though it would apply almost anywhere in Upper Canada over a period of half a century:

> Here I had an opportunity of witnessing the clearing process in all its stages. In one place might be seen a few trees cut down and the



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

STUCCO COTTAGE, HOLLAND LANDING

One of the first houses in the village.

first rough shanty of boards set up, with which by the bye many of the Irish appear to content themselves altogether for two or three years together. Then about an acre, with the trees felled and lying irregularly about; about a couple of roods cleared in the centre of it, a small log cottage set up, and the rest planted with potatoes. This would be fenced in, perhaps with the boards of the original shanty nailed to a few stumps and small trees, with their tops cut off and left rooted in the ground, as at first; whilst here and there a stump appears in the midst of the vegetation; and a rough little cow or two might be seen picking about by the road side or in the still untouched forest. A further step would be to see some of the tree-trunks laid one on another longitudinally to form a rude protection to the future field, and the rest cut up in lengths and drawn together in heaps and burning with more or less of vigour; while interspersed would be the ashes and blackened remains of former heaps, and here and there a curling wreath of smoke, telling of smouldering embers still unquenched. . . .

But we come to another clearing which is years further in advance. Here the space for the garden is augmented, and enclosed with a snake-fence; a shed or two is erected, or it may be a little out-house; the whole of the trees are gone from the first clearing, and perhaps from a second, leaving only the stumps; a crop of grain or of Indian corn covers the ground, and the original process is

> extending itself over a further portion of the forest. Further on the process has advanced another step. The original rough fence of trees no longer appears, but is replaced by the snake fence. What was cropped with grain is laid down to grass; the crops of grain and corn extend on all sides, and the forest recedes into the background; comfortable stables and barns are erected; an addition is perhaps made to the log hut; the chimney, which was of wood filled in and plastered with clay, is replaced by one of brick or stone built up from the ground; the waggon or sleigh is lying about; a pair of horses may be seen grazing in the pasture, in addition to the half-dozen of cows and calves; and if the man is an Englishman or native [French] Canadian, a few flowers make their appearance in the garden.
>
> As we approach the older settled country the rough clearings scarcely appear, such as the first I described: the farm buildings (all of wood) become capacious and are kept in good order. There is a good garden with upright palings or boards; and a substantial frame-house painted white or rough-cast, with its neat verandah and pretty green French blinds, shows that the occupier has triumphed over necessity and possesses both leisure and ability to think of comfort, even perhaps of elegance.

In after years many an aged pioneer reflected with no small satisfaction upon his life's work, and particularly enjoyed the contemplation of his rise in material prosperity as his bush lot gradually evolved into the cleared farm of his old age. Mrs. Traill tells of such a one, who liked to gaze upon the original log shanty that had become a shed for young cattle:

> I would not pull it down [he said], though often urged to do so as it stands in the way of a pleasant prospect from the window; but I like to look on it and recall to mind the first years I passed beneath its lowly roof. We need such mementoes to remind us of our former state. . . . We may now say it is good for us to be here, seeing that God has been pleased to send down a blessing upon us.

CHAPTER II

SOWING AND PLANTING

For some years while the stumps remained in the fields no attempt at ploughing was practicable. At best the land was merely raked by hand or harrowed with a rough drag, which was at first merely a heavy uneven bough or top of a tree. When the ashes on the scorched and blackened earth had been distributed and the worst inequalities evened off, the seed wheat was scattered by hand, about a bushel or a bushel and a half to the acre. The seed was then *bushed in* by the same rude implement, but sometimes a few large wooden 'teeth' were added. Soon the settler contrived to purchase or make a crude harrow, described by Thomas Macqueen, who often used it, as

> an acute-angled triangle of wood containing nine large strong teeth or tines. It is drawn with the acute angle first to prevent it from holding upon stumps. The 'tines' weigh from four to five pounds each and are powerful in breaking and tearing up obstacles.

Altogether, said Macqueen, it was 'a coarse, rude, barbarous mode of cultivation'. Another pioneer writer, the Reverend William Bell of Perth, observed that the hoe was almost the only practicable implement to use on new land, always full of roots; and its importance is the more apparent when we know that the early hoe resembled an adze or mattock. But sometimes an axe was all a settler had to cut holes among roots or sod for seed potatoes.

The teeth of early harrows were one to two inches square, and nine to twelve of them were set in the framework. That it was sufficient as a cultivator of newly-cleared land is due to the fact that no sod had time to grow before seeding, and only a crude drag was needed to rake and stir the land a bit, afterwards covering the seed while pulling out small roots and evening inequalities. Contemporary accounts show what it was like to handle oxen attached to a drag in newly-burned land. After scattering the wood ashes—than which nothing can more effectively blind the worker and cover him with soot—the bush farmer's preparation for sowing continued with accelerating intensity. The wooden yoke which held his oxen included strong hickory collars which fit closely over their necks, but there was no other harness except the chain which pulled the harrow, for the beasts were guided by a long wand or stick.

Well-matched oxen under expert direction were very different from misfits in timid and inexperienced hands, as most settlers' were. Tough roots caught the teeth every minute, the oxen jerked and were jerked in turn, and their driver had to lift the harrow over the worst spots as he shouted imprecations at his animals and tried to guide them among the stumps. The whole field was gone over two or three times before sowing, and again afterwards, both men and animals often viciously bitten throughout the work by hosts of gadflies, mosquitoes, sandflies, midges, black flies, and—most venomous of all—the huge horse-flies. Some settlers protected themselves with netting covering the whole head, while others covered their faces with a thick coating of grease. When smoke-screens were set up against these merciless pests the cattle, and even deer from the forest, came to obtain a short respite.

Ingenuity and hard work are exemplified in the experiences of a pioneer Norfolk family—the language has an especially authentic flavour:

> When father (her husband) an' me settled here in the woods the only neighbours we had was screech-owls, wolves an' bears an' yawlin' wild-cats. . . . Father [the parent] was killed by a tree fallin' on him 'bout a year before we was married. The winter before we was married my ole man chopped on the land here, and towards spring he built a log shanty. . . . My ole man had a yoke o' steers his father gin him, an' after we was married we borrowed a sled an' moved in here before it broke up. . . . That first summer we didn't have no cart or wagon, an' many a time we went . . . with the steers an' the crotch. Crotch? Why that was a thing my ole man made to haul logs on. It quirled up at the nose like a sled an' sprawled out so-fashion. You see one end of the log laid on the crotch an' tother end drug behind. . . . We planted a little corn among the stumps, an' that fall we had some cornstalks of our own raisin'. I shall never forget to my dyin' day how proud I felt of them cornstalks. How happy I was when we went out to mother's that fall with a bundle o' cornstalks on the crotch for a cushion for my feet!*

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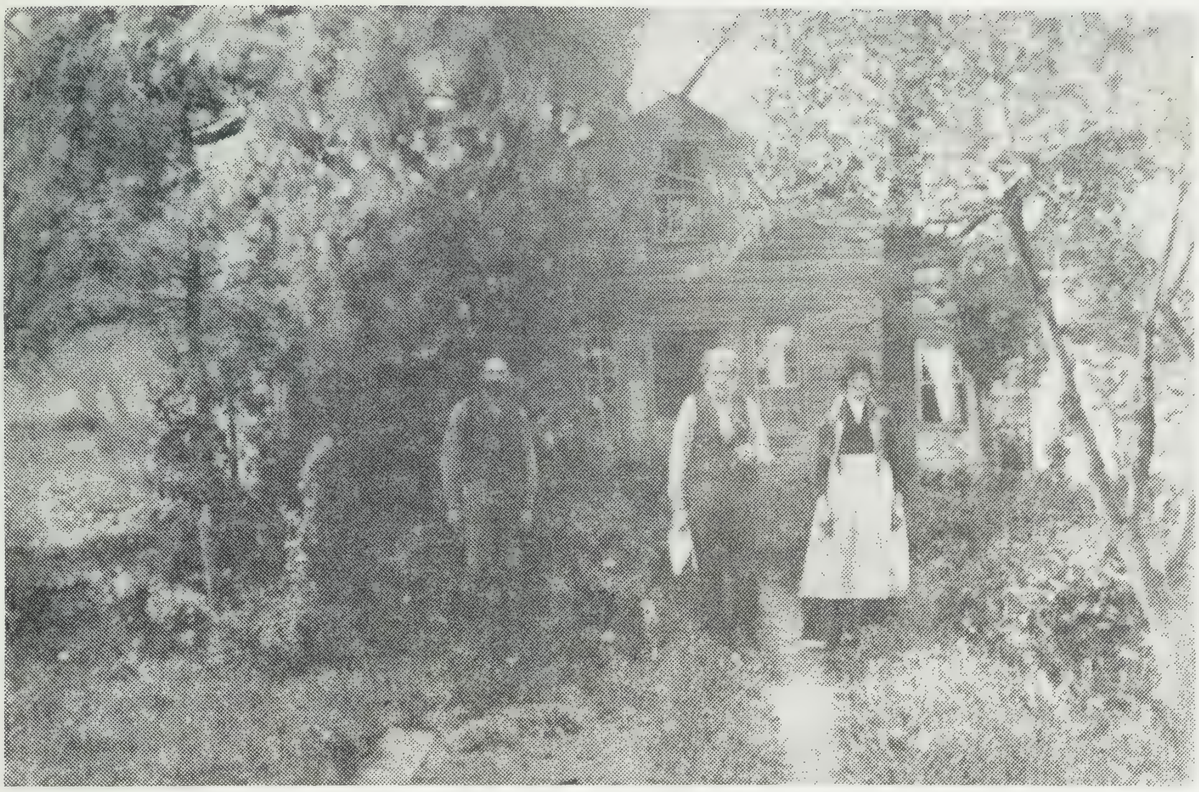
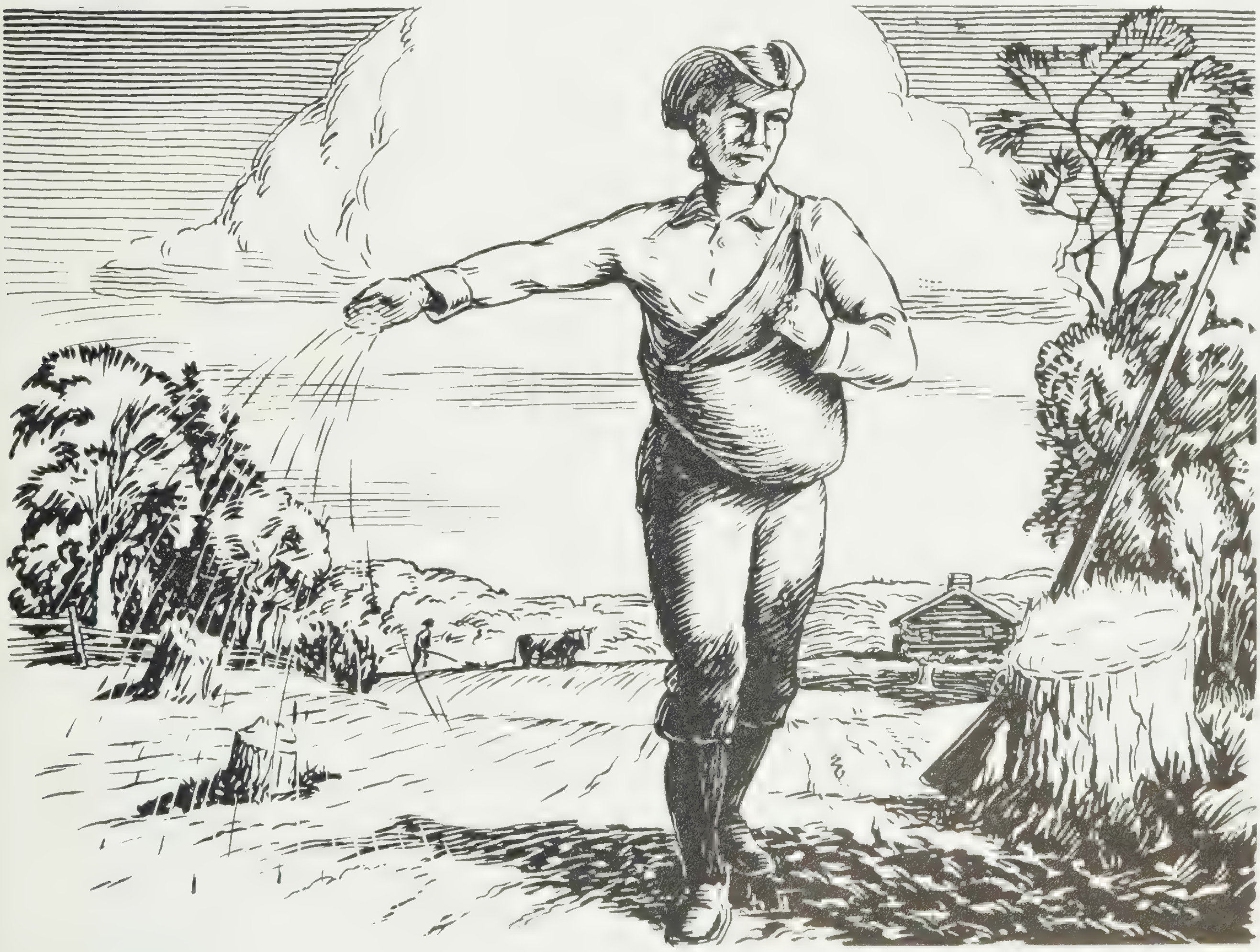
*Those familiar with Ontario local histories will recognize the source of this description in the vernacular: E. A. Owen's invaluable *Pioneer Sketches of Long Point Settlement* (1898).



Courtesy Mrs. D. Clark

HOME OF MR. AND MRS. McKAY, WALSINGHAM, LONG POINT



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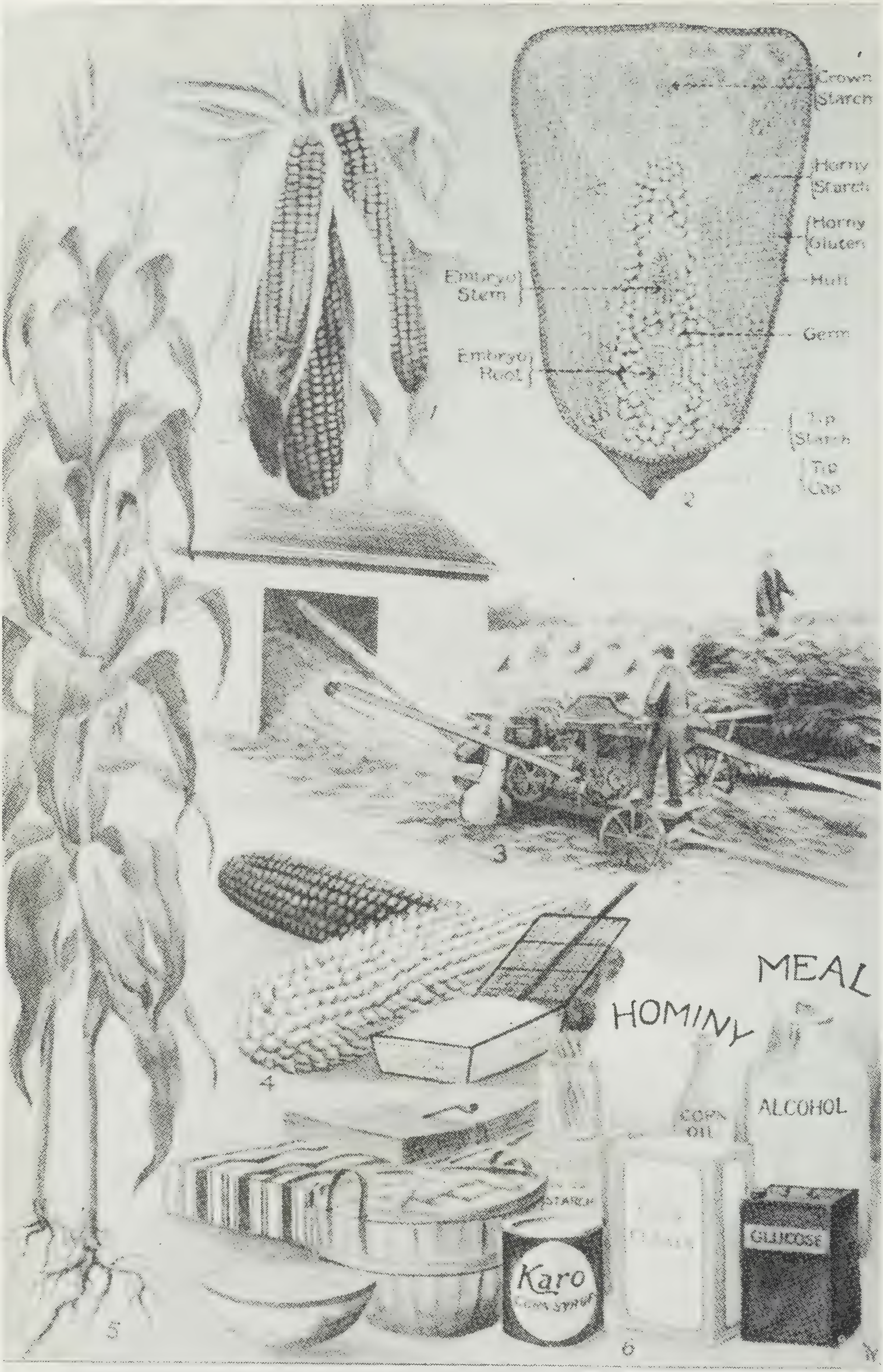
BROADCASTING SEED BY HAND



CORN

1. Ears of Corn.
2. Section of Kernel.
3. Husker and Shredder.
4. Popcorn.
5. Corn Plant.
6. Corn Products.

FROM CORN PATCH TO BREAKFAST TABLE

From an American encyclopaedia used in Canadian schools

WHEAT AND ITS PRODUCTS

As time passed, lighter and more effective harrows were developed, as well as cultivators variously known as *grubbers* and *scrabblers;* and ploughs were employed when the stumps had rotted away or been removed.

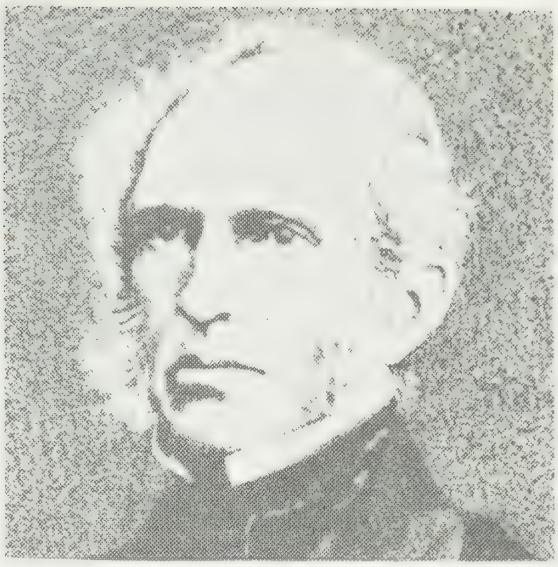
> The plough [writes Catharine Traill] is seldom put into the land before the third or fourth year, nor is it required; the general plan of cropping the first fallow with wheat or oats, and sowing grass-seeds with the grain to make pastures, renders the plough unnecessary till such time as the grass-lands require to be broken up. This method is pursued by most settlers while they are clearing bush-land; always chopping and burning enough to keep a regular succession of wheat and spring crops, while the former clearings are allowed to remain in grass.

The speed with which land of this type was put under crop was quite remarkable. Eleven pioneer settlers in Norwich Township, each with a wife and an average of six children, furnished Robert Gourlay with particulars of their first seven years, 1811-1818. Six were unable to get any crops in the first season, but the other five seeded from 4 to 14 acres each. The second year they averaged 15 acres in crop, the third 17, the fourth 19, the fifth 22, and the sixth 24; while in 1818 an average of 67 acres was under improvement—either by plough or as meadow—on the eleven farms. It was often thought best to sow newly-cleared land in Indian corn in May, and then, when it was well-grown in September or October, wheat was sown among the corn-stalks.

While in old settlements fall wheat was usually sown in the first week of September, in 'the Bush' it was more commonly the end of that month or early in October. If the land was not ready by that time old settlers advised waiting as long as possible, but not until the risk of snow might prevent sowing at all. Light frosts may injure weak wheat, but snow usually covered the fields before the more destructive frosts of winter. Some farmers followed the New England usage of avoiding winter killing of fall wheat by ploughing it in just before the heavy frosts, but others merely sowed spring wheat in its place if it was badly damaged by frost. While the yield per acre varied from ten to forty bushels, the settler was advised not to anticipate more than twenty-five or thirty; many, indeed, did not get fifteen.

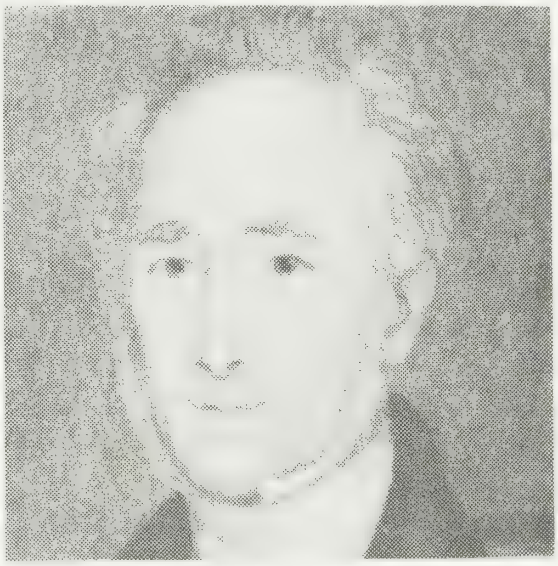
In some districts there was a certain variation, if not rotation, in early crops. The first settlers in Oxford Township, for example, described their method as follows:

ADAM FERGUSSON
Prominent agriculturist.

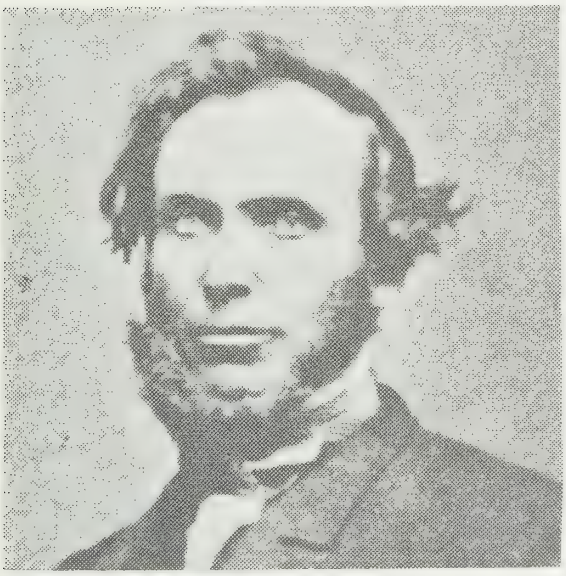


ABSALOM SHADE
Founder of Galt.

CAPT. W. F. OWEN
Owen's Sound.



CAPT. CHARLES RUBIDGE
Otonabee Township



AMOS McCREA
Saddle-bag doctor of Keene.

CATHARINE TRAILL
Naturalist and author.

PROMINENT PIONEERS

> First crop wheat; second crop Indian corn or oats; land stocked with grass with the oat crop, and with rye after the corn. When broken up from grass, wheat or peas; no manure has been applied.

In Middleton Township land was 'first sown with wheat, and laid down to grass for three years, then summer fallowed, and sown with wheat without manure'. In Norwich the first crop was usually wheat or corn, but sometimes potatoes were put in after the first harrowing of newly-cleared land. Wheat, corn, oats, and potatoes in varying order were the crops in most localities. A mixed crop of rye, clover, and timothy was sometimes sown between crops of wheat. Such grains as peas and buckwheat were usually not attempted until the land had been ploughed, and then only in certain districts; and sometimes the crops were ploughed in rather than harvested.

'Ex-Settler' considered fall wheat better than spring wheat, which he found generally more uncertain, not as readily marketable, and not usually accepted at as good a price. But for the ordinary settler he ranked spring wheat next to potatoes in importance, and in some years there was a better crop of it than of fall wheat. For best results it had to be sown as soon as the snow left the ground, for beneath the snow the soil is usually comparatively soft. In longer-cleared land, where the snow did not usually lie as deep as in 'the Bush', it might be two weeks after the snow left before sowing could take place. Altogether spring wheat, says 'Ex-Settler', 'saves your dollars from going every now and again into some Yankee miller's pocket'; but it was often late in June before the pioneer, with his poor equipment, succeeded in getting all his seeding done.

A prime fault in pioneer farming was the over-emphasis upon grain, and especially wheat. Dr. William Dunlop said he had known farmers to take twenty-seven consecutive wheat crops from their land. This obviously wasteful habit of growing nothing but wheat is not hard to excuse, though difficult to defend. In an address at the first Provincial Exhibition, in 1846, the Honourable Adam Fergusson* said:

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*One of the more public-spirited men of his day, Adam Fergusson wrote two valuable books in the early eighteen-thirties: *On the Agricultural State of Canada* (1832) and *Practical Notes Made during a Tour* (1834). The town of Fergus, which he founded, commemorates his career. He was a 'gentleman' farmer, but his progressive ideas had much to do with the introduction of veterinarians, improved stock, and the subsequent founding of the Ontario Agricultural College; see Mabel Dunham's excellent local history *Grand River*, where there is also a good account of the Honourable George Brown's stock farm, 'Bow Park', which his wife bought for him as a retreat from politics.

In times past the great and almost sole object of serious interest to the Canadian Farmer has been to grow wheat as largely, and to repeat the crop as frequently, as any decent return could be obtained. This system was perfectly natural if not perfectly wise. Wheat was found to be always less or more in demand, commanding a cash payment, while most other articles of farm produce were only to be disposed of in barter or in trade. Land was cheap and abundant, and when fields began to exhibit unequivocal symptoms of exhaustion a new clearing was commenced, and the old pretty much abandoned to nature.

Sometimes these 'wheat miners' were criticised by observers from other countries, but while the criticism was valid with respect to long-cleared farms, it was less just in relation to 'the Bush', certainly from an economic point of view; for the inefficient farmer obtained a return proportionately greater (after due allowance for the expense) than one who expended time and money on better tillage and fertilization. In the worst instances this type of farmer, having worn out his land, let it go to briars and brambles and set about clearing new; but the less thoughtless brought their land back in some measure by ploughing in a crop of clover or 'birch-wheat'.

While rotation of crops in any accurate sense was lacking in pioneer Upper Canada, a few basic principles were usually observed by progressive farmers in the longer-settled districts, and they approximated the following:

First year—spring grain like peas, or summer fallow;*
Second year—fall or spring wheat;
Third year—fallow, or spring crop of oats, peas, or barley;
Fourth year—fall or spring wheat, oats, or barley;
Succeeding years—pasture or meadow for four or five years, whereupon the rotation was repeated.

A detailed description of the types of wheat sown in Upper Canada would be a lengthy dissertation, for farmers were greatly interested in trying new varieties. Fall wheat made a better and whiter flour, so it brought a higher price; and few, consequently, thought of growing anything else. A succession of kinds of wheat drove one another from popularity as the years passed. The market alone was the factor in some instances, but the Hessian fly, various types of rust, winter killing, and a variety of alleged excellences of new types were prominent in the changes.

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*The term 'fallow' (which was often mispronounced 'follow' or 'foller' in pioneer days) does not necessarily mean idle or grass land, but merely a change from cereal crops. The need is to restore the silicates and alkalies that grain crops extract from the soil, and a crop of potatoes or turnips was more valuable than one of hay, and equally efficacious.

Where spring wheat was grown the story was much the same, with many northern European types the most popular at one time or another. Perhaps the most famous was the Red Fife, the origin of which appears to be as described by Henry Bawbell, Otonabee Township, in the *Canadian Agriculturist* of October 1849. David Fife of that township secured 'a bonnetful' of northern European wheat just landed at Glasgow, and the crop from the ears that developed produced a half bushel of wheat. A year later he had several bushels, and by gifts and sales of small quantities its growth was spread to several other farms in the district. Then the Otonabee and Asphodel Agricultural Society purchased 260 bushels at the high price of $2 a bushel and distributed it among its members. After 1848 it spread outside Otonabee and through Upper Canada, by 1860 succeeding almost every other type. It was generally approved, the resolution of a meeting of the Township of Hamilton Farmers' Club at Cobourg in 1851 being representative:

> That the Township of Hamilton Farmers' Club are unanimous in recommending the 'Fife Spring Wheat' for cultivation; as regards productiveness, flouring qualities, perfect freedom from rust, and easy to thrash, it is out of comparison the best ever introduced in this District, for strong clays or low lands.

But with equal candour, in the same district, the Northumberland County Agricultural Society issued a warning to wheat-growers, in the *Cobourg Star* in 1845:

> FARMERS BEWARE!
>
> Seed wheat, Black Sea, or Odessa wheat, imported by L. Card, is infected by the Hessian Fly or weavel.

When ploughing had become practicable the 'bull' or 'hog' or 'American hog' or 'Dutch' plough—variations of the same primitive implement—was commonly used. It had one handle and a wooden mould-board. Joseph Abbott described in his diary in 1819 the hog plough, its advantages, and the sowing of oats and peas after ploughing and stumping:

> *April 19th.*—Ploughing some rough land, which had been partially covered with bushes and briars, with a hog plough, a sort of an implement of a very light, simple, and primitive construction, without a coulter but very useful for such a purpose, as it is easily disentangled from roots which have too firm hold of the ground to be torn up. The price of one is about 25s., but that which I used was

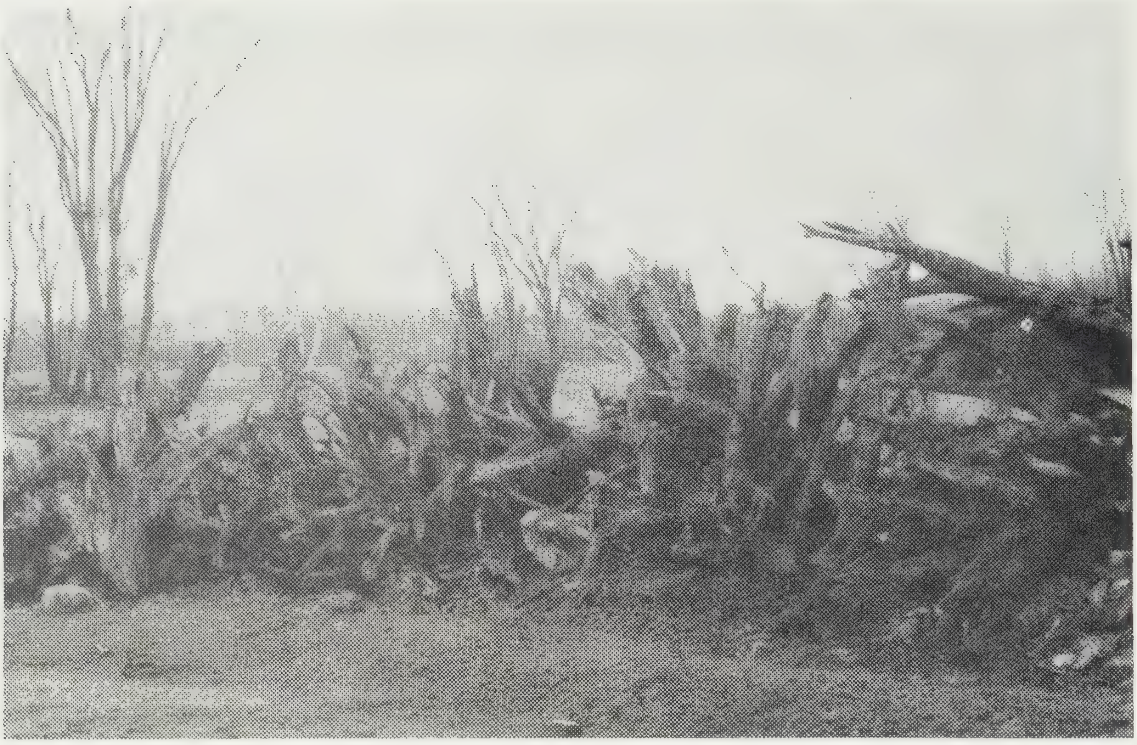
> a borrowed one, or rather a hired one at fifteenpence a day, according to a custom which I think as good as it is common in many parts of the country.
>
> *April 20th.*—Richard working away with the oxen and hog plough—Charles and I tearing up the loosened roots and casting them off into heaps to be burnt when dry, spending a good deal of time also in getting out the oldest of the stumps, which were sufficiently decayed to be eradicated without digging round them and stubbing them up, which we never think of doing but wait till they will come out like a ripe hazel nut from its husk.
>
> *April 21st.*—Finished about four acres by noon, sowed it with oats and peas mixed, a common crop in this country and profitable for the provender for horses or working oxen, and not amiss for fattening hogs with: better at any rate than oats alone.
>
> *April 22nd.*—Richard finished harrowing in the oats and peas—Charles and I at the same work as yesterday, as several roots were brought to light by the harrow which we had previously missed.

Patrick Shirreff, always a careful observer, said that it was usually seven years before the stumps were sufficiently decayed to permit use of a plough. Among miscellaneous observations in the Cobourg-Bowmanville district he noted that

> the vegetable mould in the woods was three inches deep, and the soil sandy loam. The greater part of the soil we have seen in America is of soft texture and easily laboured. Here we learned plough irons are only repaired twice a-year. At Newmarket a plough was pointed out the irons of which had not been at the smithy since the previous October and were still in tolerable order. Mildew was seen on wheat at Bowmanville and Cobourg. A lime-kiln was preparing building-lime on the shores of the lake, and stones of the same rock were quarried for building.

Later pioneers in Muskoka seldom waited anywhere near seven years before ploughing, nor did they always use oxen. There a year or two only elapsed, and the rock hazard was at least as great as the stump:

> Ploughing [writes Fred DelaFosse] is not usually regarded as a dangerous employment, but it was positively hazardous with a mare like ours and when attempted on such rocky soil. Given an uneven-tempered mare and a field where one had to guide the plough over and through such obstacles as stones, sticks, stumps, and roots, it can easily be seen that the work was perilous. Occasionally it happened that the plough-nose got under a root, and one got a celestial hoist under the chin which knocked one out as cleanly as if a prize-fighter had done it. Then the mare would take it into her head to get nasty if her traces got awry, and it took a good deal of ingenuity to get her into such a position that any back-fire from her heels would be wasted on the air and not on one's own carcass.



Courtesy George M. Douglas

STUMP FENCE

Shirreff considered that farming in Upper Canada, as far at least as newly-cleared land was concerned, left 'little room for the display of genius or management, the process being nearly the same in all cases'; and he added:

> I experienced disappointment at crops on newly-cleared land being so indifferent, having been led to suppose they were generally too luxuriant. Believing every vegetable substance to be composed of the same elements and reduceable by decay so as to enter into new combinations, I fancied the soil the very essence of fertility from having been enriched with the decaying leaves of many centuries. If all the woody fibre of the forest and vegetable mould which covers the surface could be at once decomposed my anticipated fertility would be realized. But in burning the trees fire passes over the entire surface, and consumes almost every particle of vegetable matter. The agency of fire, joined to the imperfect tilling of the soil, will sufficiently account for the want of luxuriance in first crops, which may generally be considered a fortunate circumstance when a free circulation of air is prevented.

On long-cleared farms, meanwhile, oxen for ploughing had given way to horses. Almost invariably it was done with two horses harnessed abreast and driven by reins. From an acre to an acre and a half was considered a good day's work, but on heavy land no more than four acres might be ploughed in a week. If the land was well ploughed in the autumn it was generally found well pulverized by frost in the spring, whereupon all it needed was a little work with the American or Share's harrow, 'a most effective implement, almost equilateral and triangular'. Drawn by two horses, its numerous teeth or coulters sliced every furrow into four, and if gone over two or three times the land would be as clean and smooth as a garden.

In Britain *corn* denotes grain, particularly wheat, but in America Indian corn was meant, a crop new to immigrants; and for that reason its planting and culture are frequently described in pioneer records. Joseph Pickering tells how he planted it when overseer of Colonel Talbot's farm, which may be taken as a highly advanced one for 1826:

> Planted the corn, which is done thus: after ploughing and well-harrowing the ground, parallel furrows are run by the plough three or four feet asunder, straight across the field and sometimes intersected; when the planter, with a little bag of corn before him (something like bean-setters in England), and a hoe, proceeds along these furrows and drops at from three to four feet apart two, three, or four grains of the corn in one place and slightly covers them with the hoe; some prefer planting in the furrows, others between them, according to the dryness of soil or the season. The quantity of the seed required is only one peck per acre; corn is sometimes planted on the furrow (or sod, as it is here called) of new-ploughed grass land, and does very well.

'Ex-Settler' considered the corn crop 'novel and interesting', and, if successful, one of the most valuable in 'the Bush'. A few quarts, he said, would seed an acre, and two experienced men could sow that much in a day; and for a few pence investment the common return was seven or eight hundred-fold. Sowing by two men in the backwoods, as described by him, was somewhat different from that of Pickering along the front:

> The land ought to be pretty clean for it, but it does not need to be rich. The seed is sowed in little holes about three feet apart from each other each way; the planter walks in a right line up one row and down another, sticking his hoe into the ground every step and closing the previous hole with his foot; the attendant drops in three grains at the back of the hoe each time, and occasionally a pumpkin seed. When the corn grows up a little it requires landing, and it should always be put into the sunniest spot of your clearing and the farthest from the wood, or it will never produce a head.

Its uncertainty, he said, was the chief objection to the crop, for it had failed in Canada 'for the last two or three years'. Its great enemy was frost, which killed it when young or ended its growth if later in the season. Pumpkins did well among the corn, spreading widely and producing an abundant crop.

Among coarse grains oats was most important. 'Oats', said Samuel Johnson the philosopher, 'is a grain used as food for horses in England and for men in Scotland'; but, retorted a Scot, 'where will you find such fine horses as in England and such fine men as in Scotland'! In Upper Canada it was first extensively grown in Scottish settlements, where both horses and men ate it. It would mature on almost any soil, often when it was considered too wet or dirty for any other crop; though travellers often considered the harvest small, light, and 'miserable'.

It was recommended that oats be sown as soon as the snow was gone; but the crop would ripen even if planted as late as the first week in June. Two bushels were sown per acre and covered by a light harrow. The oat crop was especially valuable as feed for stock in winter, when little else was available.

With regard to farm work in general and seeding in particular, Walter Riddell of Hamilton Township considered that the early farmer worked harder than his counterpart of the eighteen-nineties:

> Men were considered indolent [he says] who had not all the chores done before daylight. Work began before breakfast, and we toiled in the fields until sundown, with intervals for breakfast and dinner, and morning and afternoon lunch. The man with the team often sowed enough seed at breakfast-time or noon (while the horses were feeding) to keep the team harrowing until feeding time came again.*

Robert Stevenson, an observant farmer-traveller, said that most crop yields were only about half what they were in Britain, a statement at variance with many others; but he excepted potatoes, which he said produced about the same in both countries. But another traveller, the Reverend James Dixon, after observing farms in the Niagara and St. Catharines districts, concluded that agriculture was more progressive there than farming he had seen in the United States. 'The land', he wrote, 'is exceedingly rich and good; and cultivation, so far as it has extended, has evidently been conducted on an excellent principle. The crops appeared promising and abundant.'

As for potatoes, the tendency at first was to plant them in

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*Walter Riddell, father of the late Mr. Justice William R. Riddell, was the author of *Historical Sketch of the Township of Hamilton* (1897), a very valuable booklet apparently based upon a diary in which he had recorded notable developments in agriculture, lists of early settlers, and the introduction of farm machinery.

drills, like corn, which was the method in common use in Britain. They were planted so deep, said the Reverend William Bell in his *Hints to Emigrants,* that they needed no more attention until dug up in October. But he found that there was also the American method of planting in hills 'about four inches deep and eighteen broad' and some four feet apart. This, he was told, better suited the climate of Canada, but his own observations did not bear this out and he preferred drill husbandry, especially if a plough could be used to cultivate between the rows and eventually to dig up the crop as well. Where hills were used in the backwoods, many a settler formed them as he planted and did not touch them again until he harvested his crop. The hill method was probably in general use on long-cleared farms, as, for example, on that of Colonel Talbot in its heyday:

> Finished planting potatoes [wrote Joseph Pickering in his diary on June 4th] and hoed the first set ones: they are planted thus, being cut as in England; three or four of these cuttings are dropped together in one place, then the soil hoed over them into a 'hill', 2½ feet apart each way. This is the only method that can be used on new-cleared land among the stumps and before it is ploughed; but this method is adhered to when there are no stumps, or necessity for it, which I think an injudicious practice.

'Ex-Settler' observed that $4 to $5 worth of seed potatoes (7 to 8 bushels) would sow an acre; and though some farmers boasted of crops of 400 bushels per acre, 200 was good on newly-cleared land where stumps occupied from one-eighth to one-quarter of the field. Altogether the potato was recommended as 'a sure and very valuable crop', and the new settler was advised to plant twice as much in potatoes as in corn. Colonel Talbot said that these two crops sown the first year enabled the settler to support himself. The Abbott diary indicates the proportions of various crops on a farm partly cleared earlier and partly in process of clearing:

> *June 1st. and 2d.*—Sowing 1½ acres of oats on the clearing. Richard ploughing the potato land second time; Charles drawing out manure and spreading it before him; myself planting potatoes with a hoe after him; it may be here remarked that before the stumps are all out, or nearly so, it is not possible to drill up land for this crop.
>
> *June 3d.*—Finished the potatoes and reckoned up my crop. Stands as follows: wheat 3½, peas 3, oats 5, Indian corn 6, potatoes 5½—in all 23 acres; meadow 20, pasture 13, partially cleared 20, added to the 23 makes 76 acres.

But the new arrival in 'the Bush' could expect but a small fraction of such progress the first year. 'Ex-Settler' advised him as to the latest times for sowing crops:

> Oats have a tolerable chance up to the 3d or 4th of June; the grain will be poor, but they will ripen and make fine fodder chopped with the straw. Potatoes will be good to the 20th of June; the best I had last year were planted the 1st of August. These and barley, which may follow oats, are all, I think, such a settler could aim at. Indian corn ought to be in the first week in May, and is, therefore, altogether out of his reach. I would, as I have said, start early in May, hoping to be on my land in ten weeks; I would set immediately six or eight acres of chopping, giving the contract to two or three men: I would bind them to have it done in a month; I would then buy oxen and clear it off, &c., or would set the land to be given up to me ready for cropping the 1st of October; and while this was doing I myself would not be idle about a habitation; you would then not be over hurried. And to avoid surely being so I would only set before me these three things—getting in wheat—erecting some sort of an edifice, capable of being made warm—and under-brushing a number of acres for winter chopping before the snow-fall.

A concrete example is provided by James Simpson, from near Penicuik, Scotland, who arrived in Upper Canada in May 1834. Upon arrival, we are told,

> while his family were living in a temporary shed or shanty of boards on his lot, he set about the planting of potatoes, of which he had a good crop, sufficient nearly for the use of the family during the winter. He sowed in the proper time fall wheat, and as then working oxen were scarce he hoed and raked in the seed, and next year obtained about, if not above, thirty bushels of wheat per acre.

Turnips were a luxury in pioneer times, not the common crop they subsequently became. Some did not sow them, in the belief that the land was insufficiently worked to ensure success, but 'Ex-Settler' said he had seen fine turnips

> which had been put in in a very rough manner, the land having been merely well cleaned, harrowed, and cross-harrowed, and the seed covered with a coarse wooden rake. . . . Last year I had my land hoed first, and the turnips transplanted from a seedling bed; they were Swedish ones and the finest I had ever seen; but being so done by men at half a dollar a day each and food, they were not worth anything like all they cost.

The Abbott diary confirms this statement, as well as emphasizing the difficulties, and the differences between bush farming in Canada and agricultural processes in Britain:

June 21st.—Sowed half an acre of Swedish turnips (Ruta Baga) on my clearing, and hoed them in. This is necessary, as the scurf upon the new land cannot be sufficiently broken by harrowing to allow the root to expand, and ploughing being out of the question owing to the ground being so matted, if I may so term it, with live or green roots that two years must elapse before it can be at all scratched up with a plough. But the most profitable crops are obtained while the land continues in that state; which, in the estimation of an Oldcountryman, would be considered untillable and almost useless. Larger crops, it must be admitted, may be produced after every impediment to cultivation has been removed, but if the interest upon the capital sunk in bringing it into this higher state of culture be deducted out of its proceeds, the assertion will be found a correct one.

June 22d.—Clearing up half an acre more for white turnips (the globe). It may be remarked from the little attention paid to this crop that it is not considered of so much consequence as at home; and this is really the case, as we cannot cultivate them to the same perfection because the winter sets in too early and is too severe to preserve them in large quantities without too much trouble. We therefore only grow a few for our cows and ewes in the spring, to assist in producing a supply of milk for their young before the grass comes.

June 23d.—Sowing and hoeing in the white turnips.

Buckwheat was similarly rare at first. Robert Stevenson, who saw it growing in the Long Point district—'a grain I never saw before'— was told that it was good feed for swine and poultry and 'makes special good pancakes'. Sometimes it was allowed to come into flower, or almost in seed, and then 'they plough it down and put in their fall wheat on the top of it, and this produces fair crops as to quantity and excellent as to quality'. And as this was in sandy soil his mind was carried back to 'the sandy soils on the Ayrshire coast', which he thought might grow buckwheat to advantage. In Upper Canada buckwheat was supposed to 'tame' the soil and make it better for wheat.

Peas, when more than the garden variety, formed a dependable crop which was good for fattening hogs. They did not do well on newly-cleared land because of its richness and the difficulty of covering the seed with a drag; and the straw grew too rank as well. The crop would thrive better, therefore, a few years later on ploughed land. At harvest-time it was usually pulled, not cut—frequently with a rake or scythe—and then threshed. Women and children often helped with the pea crop. Travellers noticed 'immense pea fields', which were often 'hogged down'—the hogs turned into them to fatten. At first in the Niagara district, and then elsewhere after 1850, the 'pea-bug' or weevil became a very troublesome pest.

Among special crops were flax and hemp. Flax was grown in greater quantity in Lower Canada, but many Upper Canadian settlers from Loyalist times onward cultivated it. The Chryslers, early settled in Sydney Township near Belleville, grew as much as 35 tons a year; and many settlers spun linen from it, though the process was not easy.

Hemp was seldom successfully cultivated in Upper Canada, though many made the effort because premiums were offered by the government so that the British navy would not lack a continuous supply of sails and ropes. This legislation of the pre-1812 period included the provision of free seed to growers and a liberal price above the usual market value. Philemon Wright, 'the White Chief of the Ottawa', was perhaps the most successful, though his crop appears to have been grown largely in those parts of his land which were on the Lower Canada side of the river.*

Public Archives of Canada — Henry du Vernet

CHAUDIÈRE FALLS IN 1823

Philemon Wright's Mill and Tavern are to the right of the Falls.

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*Wright, one of the most resourceful, enterprising, and successful of Canadian settlers, was estimated to be worth £100,000 in 1840. He wrote an excellent description of his experiences over the years 1796-1823, entitled *An Account of the First Settlement of the Township of Hull.* It is included in Andrew Picken, *The Canadas* (1832).

It was early discovered that tobacco could be grown with success in the southwestern part of Upper Canada, and in 1821 seven hundred pounds was exported. One thousand hogsheads of it, observed Robert Stevenson in one of his letters, were grown annually near Amherstburg in the eighteen-forties, forming the town's chief trade. But only in recent times has its culture been developed both extensively and intensively in Ontario, with those engaged in it predominantly non-Anglo-Saxon.

The pioneer tobacco crop was inferior to that of Virginia, but was nonetheless profitable to those who were careful and willing to work hard at the appropriate time. Dr. William Dunlop described tobacco-growing in 1832 as very profitable

> for people who have large young families, as the culture is much like that of a garden, and the stripping, weeding, worming, &c., &c., is better done by children, who have a less distance to stoop, than by grown persons. As they are the principal labourers it is found expedient to enlist their interests on the side of their duty; and therefore it is customary, when they have by their industry and diligence saved the crops, to give them as a reward the second crop, which is less in quantity and much inferior in quality, but which, if not assailed by frosts early in the autumn, often produces enough to purchase as many good things, and as much finery, as to render the poor urchins, in their own estimation, persons of fortune for that year at any rate.*

Travellers often pointed out that rotation of crops and the use of fertilisers were almost unknown in Canada. The Canada Company, in fact, pushed the sale of its holdings in the Guelph-Goderich region by stating that the land earlier settled along the front was already worn out. This propaganda had some truth in it, for the 'atrocious system of farming generally pursued by the older settlers', as a competent observer described it, included taking twenty crops of wheat off the same land in twenty successive years and letting manure accumulate around the barn in huge quantities, preferring to remove the building rather than carting the manure to the fields. But gypsum was being used along the Ottawa as early as 1819, as this entry in the Abbott diary shows:

> *June 18th.*—Finished hoeing corn—were something longer at this work in consequence of doling out a barrel of plaster-of-paris, or gypsum, which I got for a dollar from Gananoque mills, upon an

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*Dr. Dunlop, prominent in the Canada Company, wrote *Statistical Sketches of Upper Canada* (1832) and *Two and Twenty Years Ago* (1859). As a humourist he is second only to Judge Haliburton, but it was incidental to his recording of the times.

acre and a quarter of the poorest of it, by a table-spoonful to each hill. This is a manure which is very valuable in this country, not only in consequence of its cheapness and efficiency but chiefly from the little labour required in applying it; a very material and important consideration when labour is dearer than land, a circumstance which exercises an overwhelming influence upon all agricultural operations.

Public Archives of Canada — Edwin Whitefield

BRIDGE ACROSS THE OTONABEE AT PETERBOROUGH, 1850's

Courtesy John Ostler

VILLAGE OF PAKENHAM ABOUT 1910

Crossing the Mississippi River is the only five-span stone bridge in Canada.

Gypsum, which is sulphate of lime, was also being employed before 1820 in Dumfries Township, where William Dickson owned a large deposit and gave it to farmers who had enough initiative to come and haul it away. It was used also in the Long Point district, and green manure as well, but in all districts grain crops were more frequently than not grown continually—except perhaps for an occasional change to peas and clover—without recourse to any rotation or fallow; and if clover was grown at all it was commonly left two or three years until it was full of grass and weeds.

John Howison pointed out that two bushels of gypsum properly applied was sufficient for an acre, and was especially suitable for light sandy soils; while Henry Taylor, author of *On the Present Condition of United Canada* (1849), advocated 'liming or bone-dusting' the land at least once in seven years and to the amount of 40 to 50 bushels per acre, as applied in the New England States, though five or six times as much was used in England. Not only did an application of slaked lime greatly increase crops, but the claim was made that it was an excellent remedy against potato rot, the Hessian fly, and wheat rust. Just before the Rebellion of 1837 the wheat fly had so ravaged the crops in Lower Canada that the peasantry were forced to change their food from wheat bread to oats and potatoes. Disaffection in the province was increased by this plague, for it is usual to blame the government for any disasters that cannot be laid at someone's door. Compost heaps of black swamp soil, rubbish, leaves, lime, and cattle manure were sometimes formed by the progressive farmers of both provinces and found effective for the fertilization of gardens and fields.

Among miscellaneous objections to farming as Canadians carried it on, Joseph Pickering pointed out the general lack of tares, turnips, or cabbage to pulverize and improve the soil; but he found some rape (or cole-seed) and sunflowers, both important for oil. Even on farms long cleared he found ploughing sometimes prevented by 'cradle holes', formed on wet, loose soil when trees blew over and the holes filled with water. It was true, of course, as he and many others pointed out, that a proper rotation of crops would have greatly improved productivity, and that a much more general use of manure and other fertilisers was needed. Thomas Fowler's *Journal of a Tour* (1832) observed that 'farmers appear to have little knowledge of the use of dung, and scarcely anyone thinks of putting a single load upon the fields; so that, at any farmer's barn or stable, one may see a dunghill as old as the building'.* In one of his letters in the early eighteen-forties Robert Stevenson noted a rather general improvement in this respect:

> Formerly [he wrote] the farmers here, like their brethren of Lower Canada, thought manure a nuisance, but as they had not, like them, the convenience of a river wherein to throw it, they piled it before their barns, and when the heaps became too large they dragged the barn back and commenced anew—this has been done here within these ten or twelve years—but the land being soon worn out they began to bethink them of the despised dung heap, and an accumulation of fifteen or twenty years being laid on, in the course of two or three the land was restored and produced excellent crops.

Summing up, it may be said that fertilizers were used by the more progressive, but chiefly in placing manure on summer fallow; that less advanced settlers spread around unleached ashes in an attempt to add to the soil's productiveness; and that gypsum was readily available in eastern Upper Canada, particularly from Oswego, and was usually applied to clover—especially if the soil were sandy—to prepare for a better subsequent wheat crop. In the Grand River valley farmers had to be especially enterprising to use gypsum, for they had to quarry it themselves and pulverize it with hammers.

Pastoral agriculture was late developing in Upper Canada, for as Patrick Shirreff put it,

> the forest does not yield a single blade of grass, which is owing, perhaps, to the rays of the sun being excluded from the surface of the earth throughout the whole season—by winter's snow, the foliage of summer, and the fallen leaves of autumn.

Where hay was attempted on recently cleared land it was usually found that only two tons per acre was harvested, much having to be left uncut and the scythes often broken trying to reap it. So coarse marsh hay was cut from wet unforested lands by those who had any such, left in stacks until winter, and then hauled to the barn.** If once burned off it was usually of better quality and very valuable to the settler, at least for three or four years and often for much longer.

*Occasional settlers advised the saving of manure, probably as a result of experience in Britain. A manuscript, 'Advice for Settlers in Canada', whose author is unknown, suggests the addition to regular farm buildings of a 'Dung Sted' and a cows' urine well for storing fertilisers.

**Marsh hay is not now as often harvested, but remains of split-log platforms on which it was piled in an earlier day may still be seen in the wilder lands of northerly counties.

CHAPTER III

HARVESTING THE GRAIN

In spite of all suggestions to the contrary, pioneer grain was always subject to intense competition from nature, and there were many other hazards and dangers to be surmounted before a good crop could be harvested. Cold weather often killed the young plants, or in later stages retarded or ended their growth. Warm moist weather, with heavy rains, frequently mildewed the wheat, and some travellers preferred the United States to Canada for that reason; or the grain would sprout in the ear before it was cut, or afterwards in the sheaves. In 'the summerless year' (1816) almost all the grain was frozen at one time or another, and it is traditional that heavy coats had to be worn in garnering what little there was. A long period of sun and intense heat, on the other hand, might dry it to a crisp and prevent anything but the poorest of crops.

There were other dangers. Seed wheat sown in swampy land sometimes became *chesse,* considered in pioneer days the result either of degeneration or a dormant seed; it looked like wheat, but the head opened. In August 1833, when the Reverend J. Carruthers was in Eldon Township on a missionary journey, he observed 'a calamity of an alarming aspect':

> In the month of June [he wrote in his journal] a black worm like unto the cabbage worm in Scotland appeared on their grass. The worms increased amazingly, and not only destroyed all the grass, so that they had no hay for their horses and cattle, but also eat up fields of oats and corn on several farms. They became strong and active caterpillars. The settlers had to dig ditches to keep them out of their houses. The face of the fields they covered became black and desolate looking.

The clergyman seized the opportunity to warn the settlers that this visitation was God's judgment and chastisement 'upon a wicked world, and upon his church and people, because of their sins and lukewarmness in his service'.* But if these and all other hazards were surmounted the pioneer wheat farmer harvested from 12 to 40 bushels per acre. The average yield reported by the earliest settlers in West Flamboro' and Beverly townships was only 16, but other districts garnered crops of 25 and 30 bushels, a large number of factors entering into the harvest.

It is a curious thing that for some 4000 years, in spite of the prime importance of agriculture, the world's farmers continued to use tools that the ancient Egyptians had. Among these was the sickle which our pioneers used for reaping, the blade a little longer, perhaps toothed, and of iron or steel, but essentially the same ancient implement. Joseph Gould recalled a rhythm method of sickling that injected a spirit of competition into the work. A good reaper led the way, and a number of others followed, each about a stroke behind the one ahead of him.

While estimates vary, the amount of harvesting that could be accomplished with a sickle was probably not more than one-fifth of what a workman could do with a scythe; and the scythe's productivity was shortly increased by the development of the cradle. In sickle work the harvester had to stoop almost to the ground, clutching the stalks with his left hand while he cut them with the right. He then laid the stalks carefully to one side on the stubble, to be gathered, bound and placed in stooks by other workers. To reap and stook a stand of an acre of wheat, yielding some twenty bushels, thirty to forty hours' labour was needed. In Stanhope Township, we are told, Thomas Mason, who had been crippled when struck by a falling tree, sat on the ground and cut a whole acre of millet with a sickle, for the crop was of such heavy growth that the cradler he had hired refused to cut it.

The sickle or reaping hook, sometimes locally known as the 'Wild Goose drag', finally gave way to the scythe, which was developed simultaneously in the British Isles and on the European continent. This implement enabled the reaper to stand upright and increased by four or five times the amount he could cut. Its blade was flatter and considerably extended, and its handle lengthened and curved; and it was shortly developed into the cradle.

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*Very few intelligent people would be inclined to view a caterpillar plague in any such light today; and effective treatment by a pesticide—perhaps from airplanes—might well remove or localize the attack. As human knowledge increases, rational succeeds supernatural explanation.

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THE SICKLE OR REAPING HOOK

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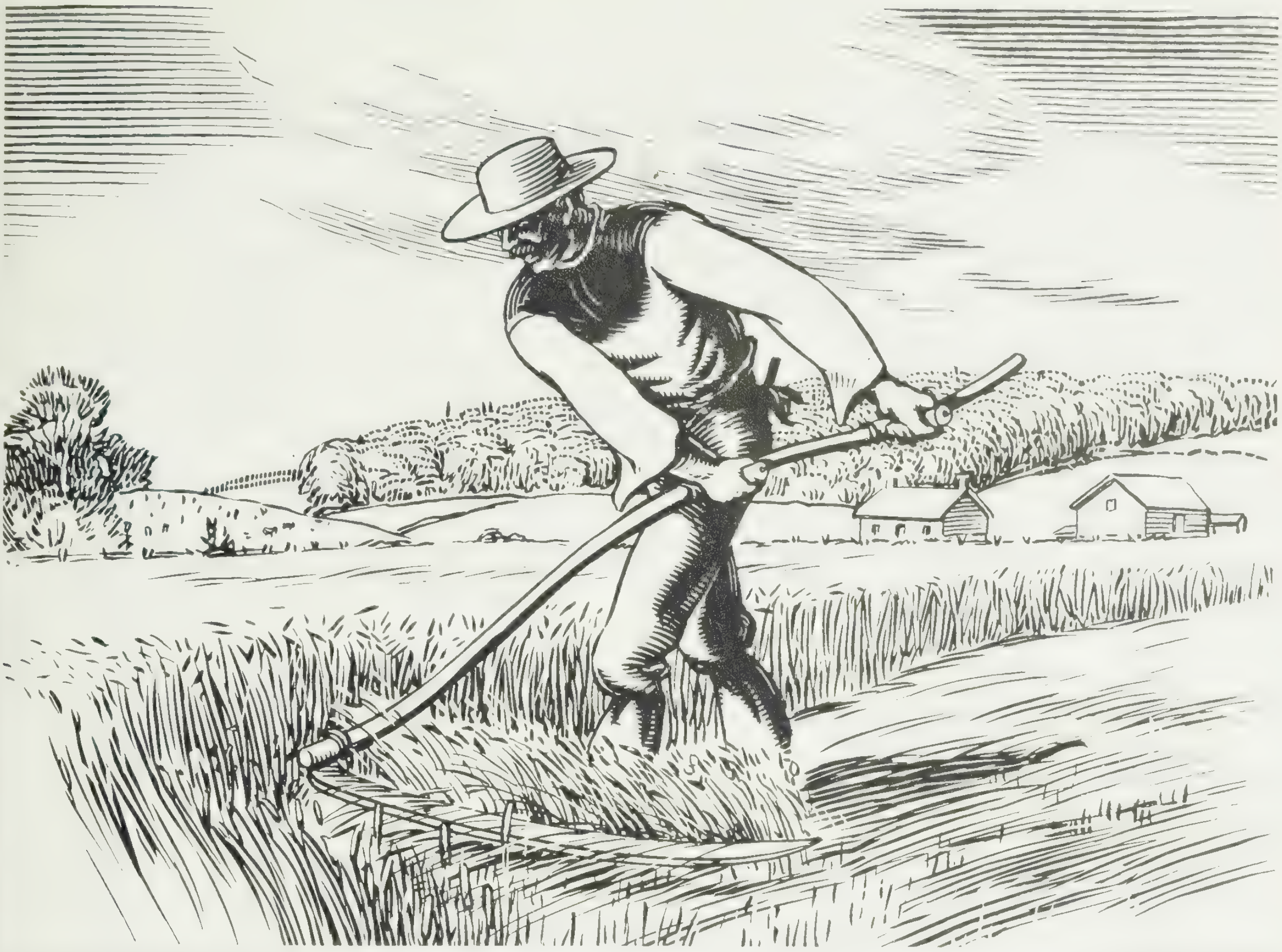
BINDING SHEAVES WITH A BAND OF STRAW

> I have seen [recalled Samuel Jones, settled along the Lake Ontario front] the sickle give place to the cradle, the cradle to the reaper, and the reaper to the self-binder. Intermediate between the sickle, and the cradle was a scythe with a hole bored in the centre of the blade and connected with the snath by a wire 'hauled tout' [taut]. With that tool an expert could lay a swath as neatly as swaths were afterwards laid by a cradle. Our first cradle, called 'the Grape Vine', was made by Asa Davis at Newcastle. It was a clumsy instrument, but Joseph Moulton once cut six acres of rye with it in a day.

In Elizabethan England a cradle was in use for reaping barley, and a similar implement was developed by European Quakers. This apex of hand-tool development was brought to the United States between the close of the War of Independence and 1800, and there it was further perfected. Its cutting blade was somewhat shorter than a scythe-blade, but attached to the handle was an ingenious framework of hardwood *fingers,* so placed that they caught and held the stalks as they were cut. The whole body was brought into play as this implement was used, and the reaper could cut and deposit the grain in loose bunches called *gavels,* ready for the *bandster* to bind it into sheaves. Two men, one of them with a cradle, could now reap and bind from three to five acres in a long midsummer day. The cradle did not, of course, greatly lessen the drudgery of farm labour, though increasing its tempo.

Canniff Haight describes the process in more detail in his *Country Life in Canada Fifty Years Ago,* though his account definitely refers to a long-settled farm on the Bay of Quinte:

> In August the wheat fields were ready for the reapers. This was the great crop of the year. Other grain was grown, such as rye, oats, peas, barley, and corn, but principally for feeding. Wheat was the farmer's main dependence, his staff of life and his current coin. A good cradler would cut about five acres a day, and an expert with a rake would follow and bind up what he cut. There were men who would literally walk through the grain with a cradle, and then two men were required to follow. My father had no superior in swinging the cradle, and when the golden grain stood thick and straight he gave two smart men all they could do to take up what he cut down. Again the younger fry came in for their share of the work, which was to gather the sheaves and put them in shocks. These, after standing a sufficient time, were brought into the barn and mowed away [*i.e.,* stored in the mow], and again the girls often gave a helping hand both in the field and the barn. . . .
>
> The mowers had to shear the land close and smooth. The rakers threw their winrows straight, and the men made their hay-cocks of a uniform size and placed them at equal distances apart. So in the grain field the stubble had to be cut clean and even, the sheaves



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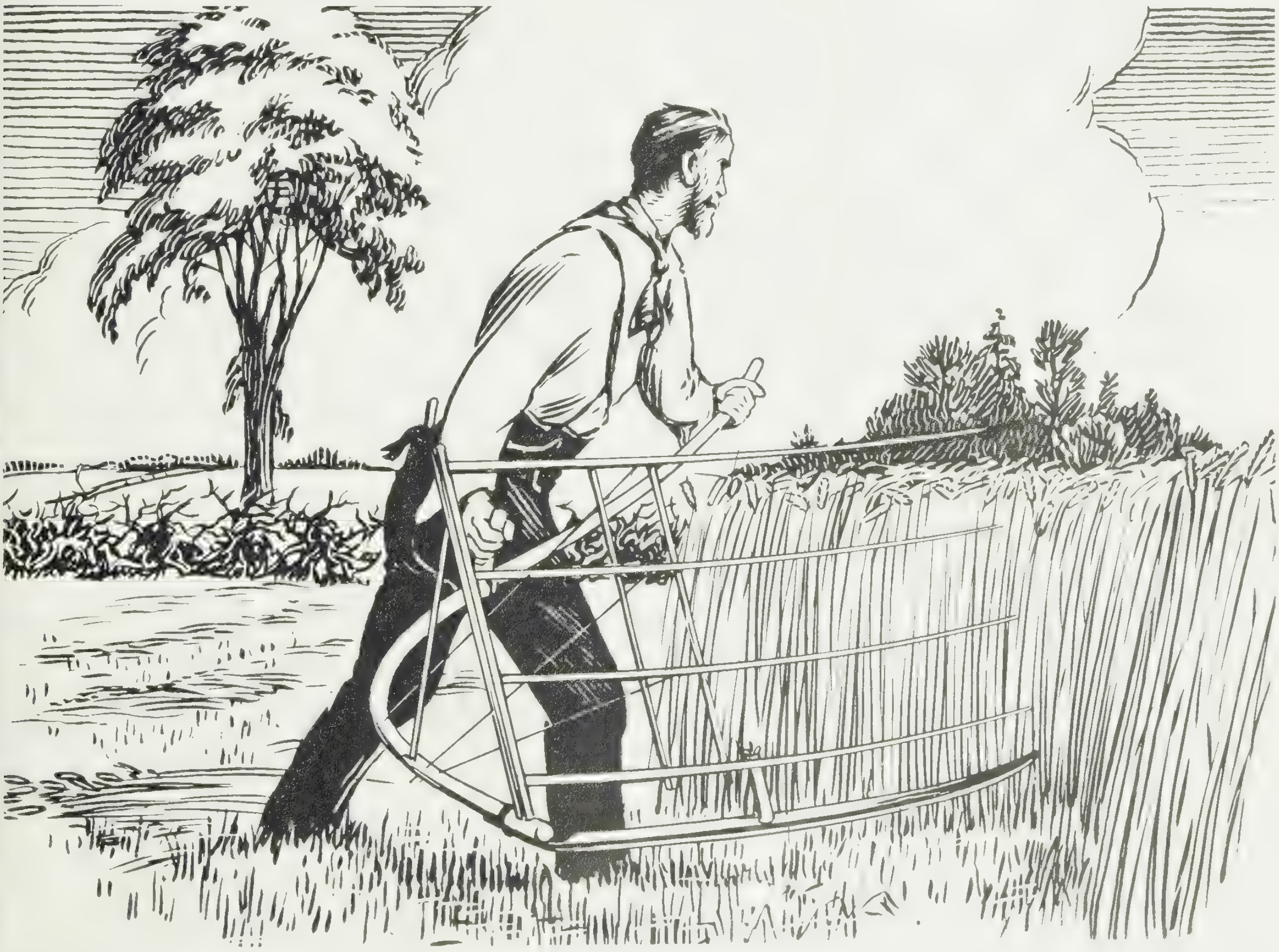
THE SCYTHE



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THE CRADLE

well bound and shocked in straight rows, with ten sheaves to the shock. It was really a pleasure to inspect the fields when the work was done. Skill was required to load well, and also to mow away, the object being to get the greatest number of sheaves in the smallest space. About the first of September the crops were in and the barns were filled and surrounded with stacks of hay and grain.

Patrick Shirreff observed the process of cradling with some care, and makes comparisons with contemporary British harvesting:

> The greater part of the crops had been carried, and those of wheat remaining in the field appeared particularly shabby compared with those of Britain, being thin on the ground and short in the sheaf. I examined a cradler at work in an outfield, who was making good work, cutting low, and laying down the ears with regularity. The implement is brought round with a full and awkward-looking sweep, nine or ten feet wide, and jerked so as to throw off the stalks, the whole of which are collected in the cradle. By this mode of operating, the cradler supports the weight of the crop collected in the sweep on his arms, and received no relief from any part of the cut crop or implement resting on the ground, as in the case of mowing grass with the common scythe of Britain; a heavy crop of grain must, therefore, be particularly fatiguing to the cradler.

And many a cradler, he might have added, cut the outside of his left leg as he released the heavy weight of the swath.

There were people—even among the rocks of Muskoka in 1880—who could wax poetic about the rhythm and the joy of cradling—'the glorious sunlight overhead . . . ,' and similar sentimentality that was very frequently far from the true state of affairs, for it all depended on the field.

> Ah yes indeed, [says Fred DelaFosse from sad experience], what more could one wish for than that one didn't have to do it. For here is another picture. Again the glorious sunlight, again the back bowing to the sweep of the cradle, but instead of the sweet paeans that one might feel like raising to the goddess Ceres, a string of mixed utterances in which profanity plays a major part. For there is no rhythmical sweep possible in a field where stumps abound and where roots and snags encumber the ground. Never a day passed without a cradle or two being rendered absolutely unserviceable by having all its fingers dismembered or its blade hacked to pieces against rocks or stones. And it was the same with the mowing. Scythes got bent double and snaths got smashed in our daily fight with the enemy. It was an uneven struggle, for the stumps had always the best of it.

The cradle ended its days in the memory of many still living as a means of avoiding the loss of grain near the fences, for it would either be too close to be caught by the mower or would be trampled by the horses; so many a careful farmer cut the first swath around the field before the mower finished the job. In small rough fields in rocky uplands such hand implements have still an important place.

Upper Canadian farmers seldom thatched their grain, tying up all types of it into sheaves. These, as Joseph Pickering observed, were

> made into small stacks, with the middle kept full, the butts out and inclining downwards to shoot the rain; but, I scarcely need add, it is ineffectual to keep it dry and from sprouting, yet it is of but little consequence while they use it themselves or in the distillery; but the Welland Canal will induce them to raise more wheat for exportation, and then it will be essentially necessary to thatch and preserve the grain in the best possible order.

James Logan described in detail, in his *Notes of a Journey,* the harvesting activities on his brother's farm between Dundas and Guelph in 1836:

> The wheat being ripe, he commenced cutting on the 24th August, when two of his neighbours came with cradles. We all turned out at six o'clock A.M., there being three cradlers and three binders. My brother and I undertook to put up the corn into stooks. My brother's two bondmen, one of whom was an Englishman, could not keep up with their cradlers, so that he was obliged to assist them in binding; but the other binder, being more active and having been several years in Canada, kept pace with his cradler. The large thistles, some of them seven feet high, caused us great annoyance.*
>
> We went home to breakfast at eight, returned in an hour, worked until one when we had dinner, resumed our labour at two, and continued until six. It is customary to give every two men a bottle of whisky to mix with the water. . . . The three cradlers cut five acres daily, so that the eighteen acres of wheat were all reaped in less than four days. Much corn is wasted, both because the cradler scatters it about too much and because the binder is too much hurried to keep up with him. What is left in the field, however, is used for fattening pigs.

Oxen or horses hauled grain and hay to the barn for storage. and it was often only by day-and-night work that the crops could be got in before heavy rain or an early frost damaged them. Susanna Moodie describes the near-disaster that resulted on her farm when a brutal driver so badly injured one of their oxen at a bee that it had to be destroyed; and only by borrowing oxen

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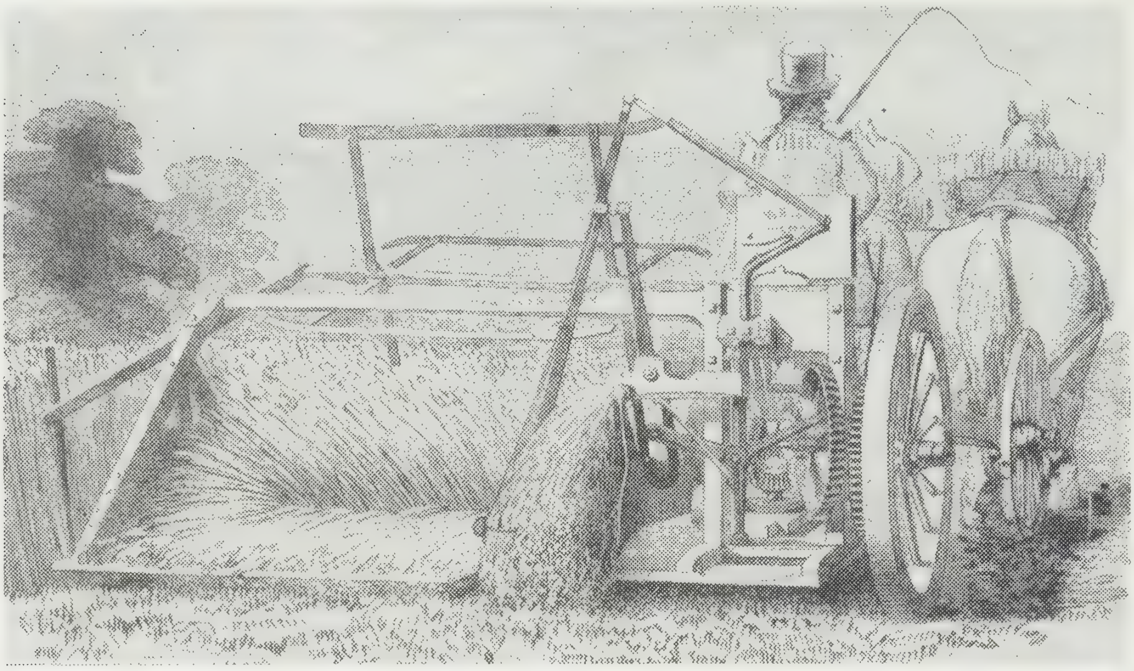
*Weeds of any type were a handicap on any farm. The Hallowell Town Meeting of 1798 adopted a resolution that anyone tolerating the Canadian thistle on his land was to be fined 20s., but in general the individual farmer was left to take whatever action he saw fit.



Illustrated London News

AUTOMATON, OR SELF-RAKING REAPER, 1853
Invented by J. Atkins, Chicago.

and carrying much of the wheat were they able to store it in time. The Logans stacked it pending the threshing, and found the hauling difficult:

> In three or four days more [Logan's account continues] we had it all in the stack-yard. The loading was a very tedious operation. We had a pair of oxen in a waggon with sides, and a pair of horses in a sleigh. My brother drove the sleigh, his friend the waggon; his man built the stack and I forked. Even an empty cart has much difficulty in steering among the stumps. At every stook I was obliged to consider how I was to get to the next, and almost every load was twice overturned before it got out of the field. Sometimes the waggon would stick fast between two stumps, and much time was lost in extricating it.

Until the eighteen-forties, when horse-rakes were introduced, all such work was done by the old wooden hand-rakes, but there is no suggestion that the settlers at any time engaged much in gleaning after the work of reaping was done. Huge flocks of pigeons would often have made any such operation unproductive, but in any case most of the pioneers felt they could make much more effective use of their time.

Some English farmers considered that Canadian methods of stacking such grain or hay as their barns would not hold were defective and wasteful, especially in a wet season.

> The straw here used for thatching [observed Mrs. Edward Copleston in 1860] has all been passed through the machine and is therefore

The Dominion Illustrated

WHEAT STACKS

ill fitted for thatching purposes. Few farmers ever reserve any hand-threshed straw and comb it into reed, as at home, but those few are amply rewarded. Our loss from damaged grain, on this head, must have been exceedingly great, but every neighbour lost nearly as much. The quantity of grain rendered unmarketable under this system in any productive year, which is generally after a wet season, must be prodigious.

Threshing (or *thrashing,* as most farmers spelled and pronounced it) was either done with the flail or trodden out by horses or oxen. Colonel Talbot, who had a fine farm, preferred the flail, a jointed pounder used to beat out the grain from the sheaves on the barn floor. A hired man usually received his board and one-tenth of his production, and on a dry day a good worker could thresh from eight to fifteen bushels. But many of the pioneers had neither the facilities, the equipment, nor the skill to produce so much with the flail:

When our first grain was harvested [recalled Linwood Craven of McGillivray Township, Huron County] it was put in a stack near the cabin, and there was no place to thresh it save on the cabin floor. I carried in one or two sheaves at a time, and in threshing I had to stand between two of the split logs forming the roof so that the flail would not hit the ceiling. Meantime my wife covered baby with a blanket to prevent the dust from choking him.

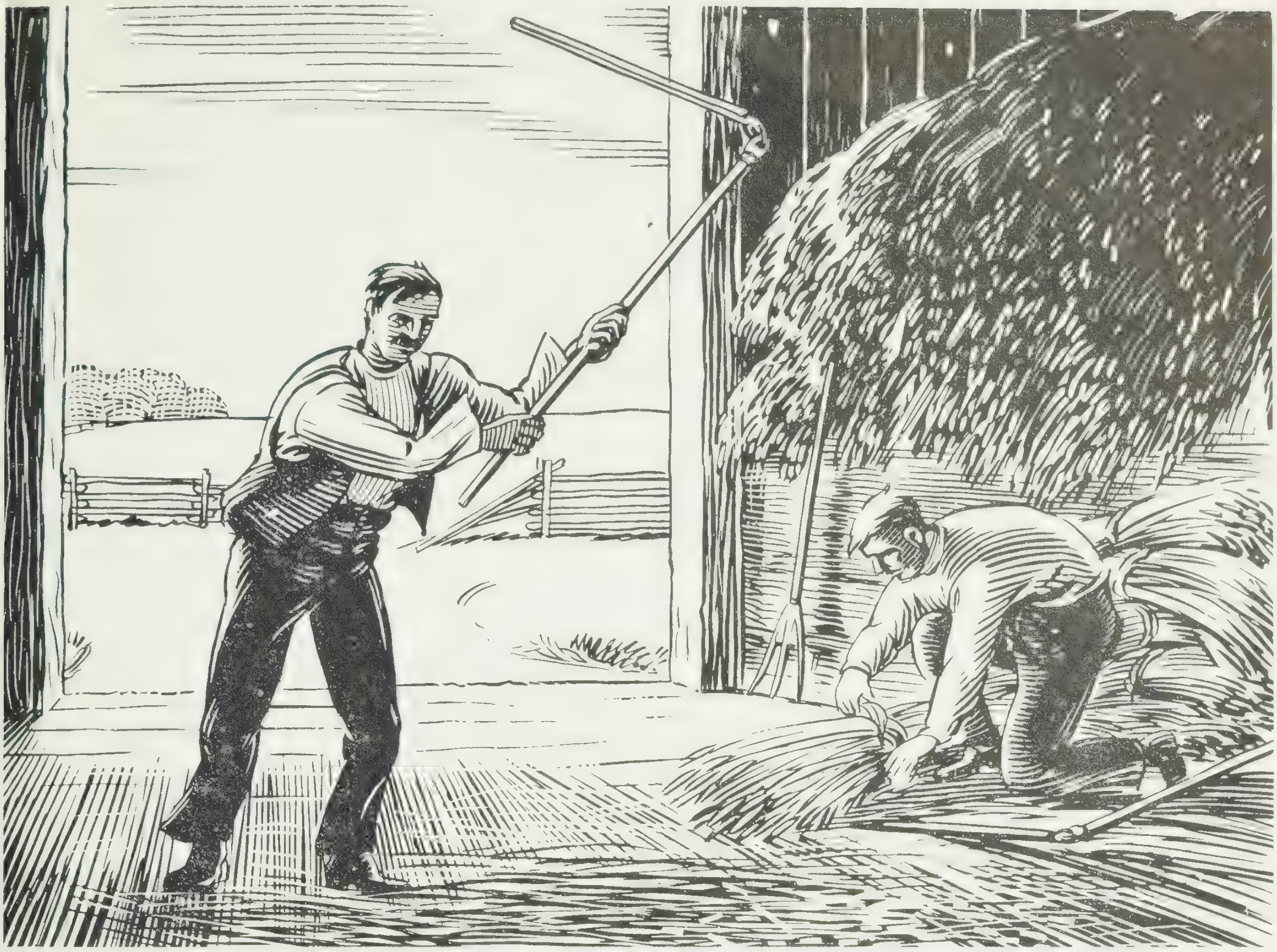
The first grain on John Treffry's farm, Norwich Township, Oxford County, appears to have been threshed by *rushing.* In order to thresh in this way, we are told, 'a pole was placed horizontally two feet above the floor of the barn or cabin, and then as much wheat as one could hold in his hands was beaten over this pole to thresh out the grain'. One entry in his diary relates that Treffry spent most of a day in rushing sixty-six sheaves, from which a bushel and a half of wheat was obtained. After being threshed the grain was put on sheets to dry and then sent to a neighbour's to be put through a winnowing-machine, the primitive fanning-mill of the day.

Treading out by cattle was neither easy nor cleanly. Farmers in Markham Township laid sheaves all over the barn floor, brought horses and oxen in, shut the doors, and forced the animals to tramp among them, often up to their bellies. When the animals became fatigued they were allowed to stand until their supervisors 'turn it over and throw it up slack again', and so the work continued until all was threshed. Four horses and a man could tread out some thirty bushels in a day, but for obvious reasons the wheat was usually more fit for the distillery than the grist-mill. French settlers along the Detroit River sometimes used a horse-power machine which was a step in advance. Patrick Shirreff saw them in operation:

> In several instances I examined a machine with which the French inhabitants were thrashing out grain. This was a beam twelve or fifteen feet in length with projecting spars like the spokes of a wheel, resting on the ground at one end and rising with an elevation to suit the draught of a horse at the other. The lower end of the beam was without spars, which increased in length according to the elevation. As the horse moves in a circle the beam revolves, which brings the spars successively in contact with the grain spread on the floor, and by which means it was beat out from the straw.
>
> This mode of separating grain from straw is evidently the first step from treading it out by animals, and is, perhaps, as old as the flail. An economizer of labour would have strewed the gangway of the horse with grain, so that it might have assisted in the operation by treading with its feet. I have not been able to learn if this plan is known in France or any other part of the world. It has not been adopted by the Americans or British Canadians, although it must be an assistance to, if not calculated to supersede, the treading of animals.

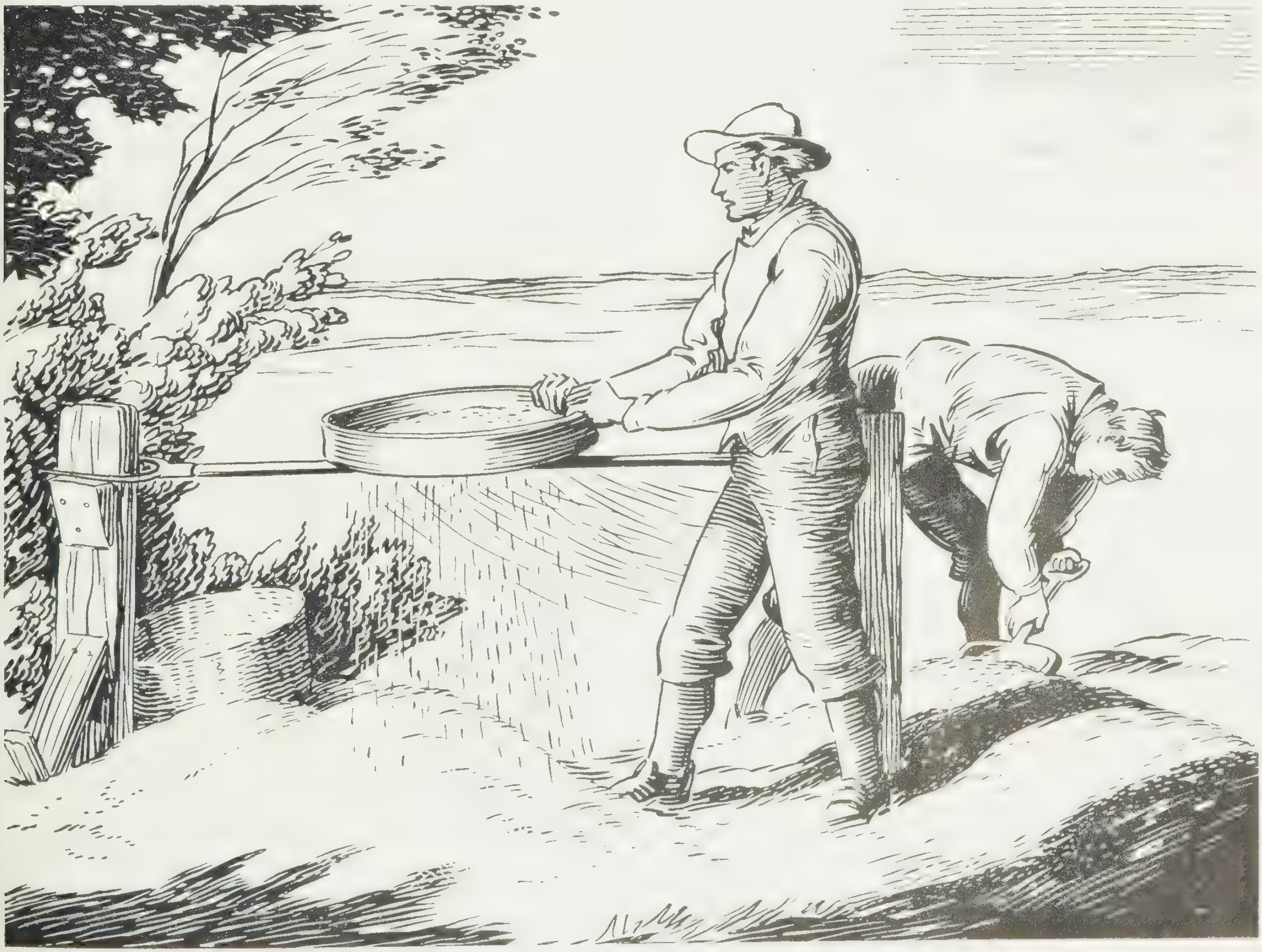
Sifting and cleaning grain was another primitive operation. In general, until fanning-mills were invented, it was put through a screen or shaken in a sheet in the wind, so that the chaff would be blown away. John McDonald of Kincardine Township had a special method:

> We used a 'wecht' for that purpose. This was a sheep-skin with the wool removed. The skin was tacked to a wooden rim, something



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

THRESHING WITH THE FLAIL



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

WINNOWING THE GRAIN

> like the end of a drum, but the skin was slack, not tight. We used this as a scoop to lift the grain from the bin and then allowed the grain to fall on a sheet laid on the ground, the wind blowing off the chaff as the grain fell. One day when we were about out of flour there was no wind. When a breeze came up with the sunset I began cleaning, and kept at the work by the light of the moon until two in the morning. This job followed a full day's threshing with the flail; and before daylight next morning I was off with my grist to the Harris mill, twenty miles away.

The first settlers at Port Hope in 1794, writes W. A. Craick, used a *fan* made of

> ash-boards in shape of a half-circle of radius two feet, with a rim about six inches wide bent round the circle and having holes cut at each side for handles, the whole resembling a large grain scoop. This was held in front of a person and shaken when filled with grain. The chaff was separated by the wind and the grain fell to the ground. . . . The next problem was to get it ground. This necessitated a journey to Belleville*, where a grist-mill had just been erected by Col. Myers. This expedition was undertaken in winter, the grain being dragged through the pathless woods on rough sleds.**

The first fanning-mills went from farm to farm, as threshing outfits did later; and primitive threshing machines, operated by horse-power, consisted, says Samuel Jones who farmed near Newtonville,

> of little more than a cylinder, and the threshed straw had to be raked away by hand. I spent one winter operating this threshing outfit. Our practice on arriving at a farm at night was to break the crust on the snow where the horse-power was to be placed, and then to let the power down to solid ground. Snow was then packed around the machine and water poured on the snow. By morning the horse-power would be frozen solidly in place and the necessity of staking avoided.

Most threshers, unless the work was done at a bee, were paid the current wage in cash. 'If you pay in kind for threshing', writes 'Ex-Settler', 'one bushel of nine is the usual rate.' Some farmers had a horse-power of their own, for it was highly useful for a variety of purposes. Not only could it operate the threshing outfit, but also the circular saw and a number of other farm machines. The general procedure was to hitch up from two to four teams of horses to the arms, and as they walked in a circle the motive power was supplied. This was transmitted to a *jack* by means of rods, and a belt from a pulley on the jack operated whatever machine was being used. By removing the arms it was not difficult to transport the horse-power from farm to farm by wagon.

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*Earlier called Singleton's Creek and then Meyers' (or Myers') Creek, Belleville was named in honour of Arabella Gore, wife of an early lieutenant-governor. In 1794 Captain John W. Meyers erected what is said to have been the first Canadian brick house.

***Port Hope Historical Sketches* was published on the occasion of an Old Boys' celebration in 1901, and its author W. Arnot Craick is still in good health and retains a youthful spirit.

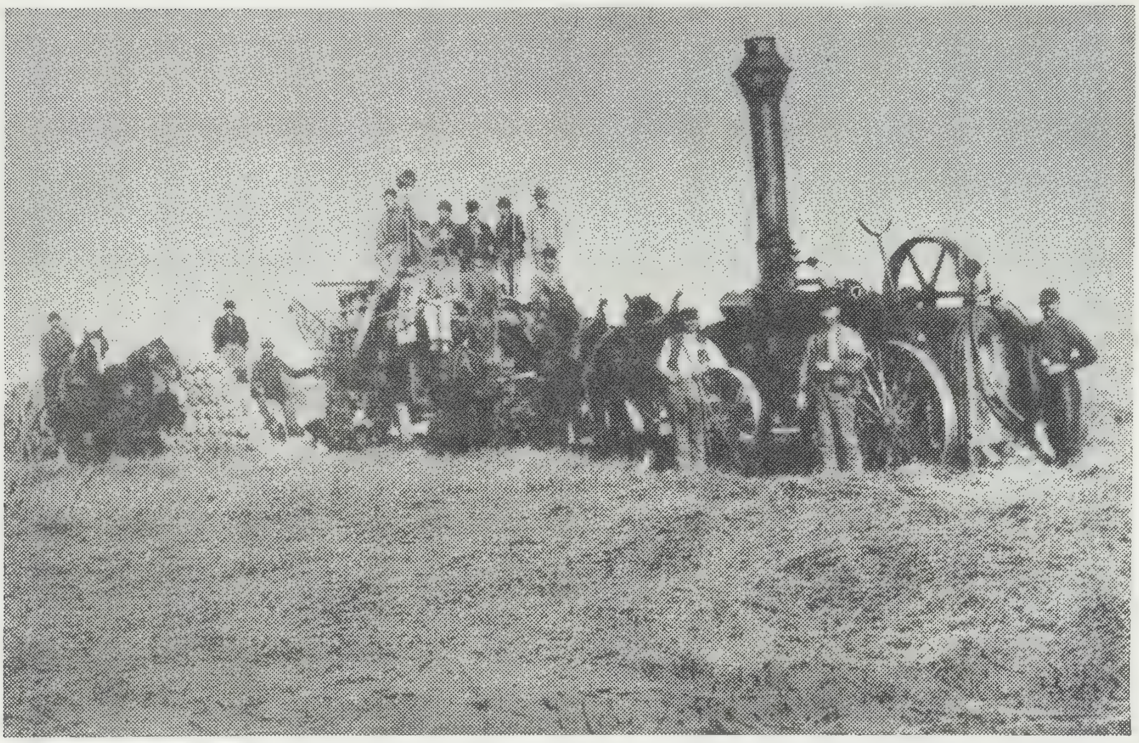
But it was not long before a practice developed that we still have with us, for 'the threshing' as a social phenomenon commenced about 1850. In her book *The Englishwoman in America* (1856) Isabella Bird gives a description of it that might apply anywhere in the subsequent hundred years, except that whiskey-drinking became much less prominent in the 20th century:

> When a person wishes to thrash his corn he gives notice to eight or ten of his neighbours and a day is appointed on which they are to meet at his house. For two or three days before grand culinary preparations are made by the hostess, and on the preceding evening a table is loaded with provisions. The morning comes, and eight or ten stalwart Saxons make their appearance and work hard till noon, while the lady of the house is engaged in hotter work before the fire in the preparation of hot meat, puddings, and pies; for well she knows that the good humour of her guests depends on the quantity and quality of her viands.
>
> They come in to dinner, black from the dust of a peculiar Canadian weed,* hot, tired, hungry, and thirsty. They eat as no other people eat, and set all our notions of the separability of different viands at defiance. At the end of the day they have a very substantial supper, with plenty of whisky, and if everything has been satisfactory the convivial proceedings are prolonged till past midnight.

The grist or flouring mill was the next step for farmers who wanted their own flour in preference to selling their wheat. 'Millers', explains Joseph Pickering, at the same time injecting a little humour into the situation, 'are allowed by law, for grinding, one-twelfth—it has been one-tenth, I am told, but some wise-acres, who thought it was not enough, petitioned for one-twelfth!' Most mills were run by water-power, but windmills were much more common in the French settlements on the shores of the Detroit.

The varying rates which millers charged, and the grades and prices of flour in the early eighteen-thirties, are detailed by 'Ex-Settler', who found that wheat varied from 60 to 64 pounds to the bushel:

*What was thought to be a weed was actually smut.



THRESHING OUTFIT NEAR HAMPTON

If your wheat stand sixty pounds they will give you a barrel of superfine flour containing 196 lbs. for every five bushels, and the bran and shorts they will either retain and give you a barrel, or you may have them and provide it; but bags will do as well for the market (flour barrels cost three-eighths or one-quarter of a dollar each). Wheat has usually been a dollar and quarter per bushel at Quebec, a dollar along the Rideau and Ottawa, seven York shillings at Toronto, and five or six York shillings in the extreme parts of the Upper Province, but the variation of price is considerable. . . . In 1832 . . . the crop was wretched and good flour very scarce. . . . I advise you not to purchase any without careful examination; make them open the barrels for you, not regarding the branding on them which will always be adduced to you as a proof of its prime quality—but which is no such thing—and see there are no little black specks through it, and that it is yellow and not bluish. The Americans can tell flour by feeling it. . . . Wheat is considered as cash, at the price of the year, everywhere through the province; . . . but in the distant parts among the new settlements it is not so easy often to get cash for it.

But the distilleries, of which most settlements had several, got a good deal of the wheat, corn, and rye. Joseph Pickering stated that he sent 200 bushels to the *still,* and was to get in return 7 quarts of whiskey per bushel, the rest of the product (from 1 to 1½ gallons) paying the distiller for his work. Sometimes potatoes and pumpkins were also distilled, and the whiskey resulting from 'black mouldy rye' and other low-grade ingredients is better imagined than described.

Courtesy Olive Newcombe T. H. Wilkinson

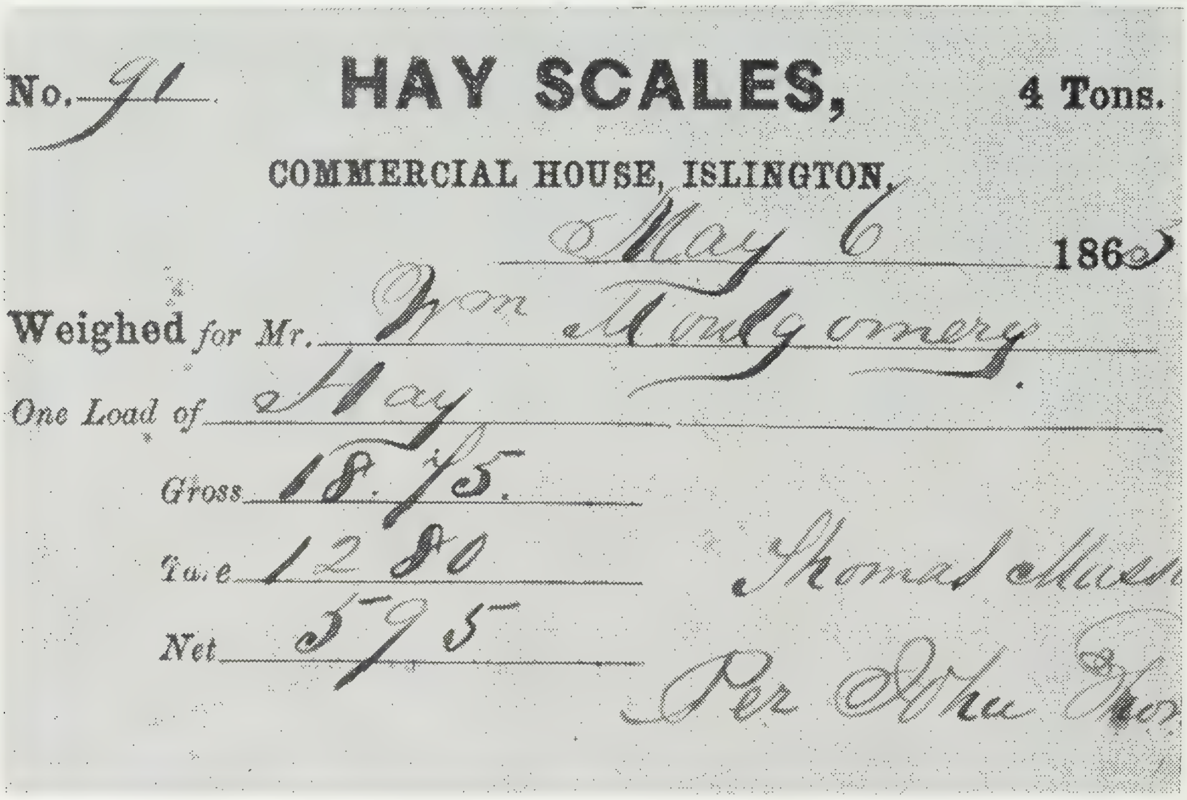
FISHER'S MILL, DUNDAS, 1870
Erected in 1834 and long known as the Gore Grist Mills.

The hay crop, when the cleared land became suitable for it, and the lessening pressure of grain and other food crops made it feasible, became characteristic of Upper Canadian farms. Perhaps Canniff Haight's account of it describes most faithfully the typical operations:

> The mowers were expected to be in the meadow by sunrise, and all through the day the rasp of their whetstones could be heard as they dexterously drew them with a quick motion of the hand, first along one side of the scythe and then the other; after which they went swinging across the field, the waving grass falling rapidly before their keen blades and dropping in swathes at their side. . . .
>
> As soon as the sun was well up and our [*i.e.,* the boys'] tasks about the house over, our part of this new play in the hayfield began, and with a fork or long stick we followed up the swathes and spread them out nicely so that the grass would dry. In the afternoon it had to be raked up into winrows—work in which girls often joined us—and after the tea one or two of the men cocked it up while we raked the ground clean after them. If the weather was clear and dry it would be left out for several days before it was drawn into the barn or stacked; but often it was housed as soon as dry.

There is, of course, a right time to cut hay to ensure its greatest value as feed for stock. Early cutting was generally favoured—within a few days after it had flowered; and there was frequently a fairly satisfactory second cutting late in the season. If left too long the hay was little better than straw. In the days of scythe and hand-rake the cost of getting in the hay was computed to be as much as one-half its value; but with mowers, horse-rakes, and horse-forks it was not more than one-fourth, and sometimes as low as 78 cents a ton when the quantity was large.

A number of labour-saving inventions were in at least occasional use in early Upper Canada. The hay-sweep could easily be constructed, and if used with the horse-fork it would enable two or three men and a couple of boys, with the help of three horses, to draw and store 30 tons of hay per day. *Tucker's Annual Register* describes it as



No. 91 **HAY SCALES,** 4 Tons.

COMMERCIAL HOUSE, ISLINGTON,

May 6 1865

Weighed *for Mr.* Wm Montgomery

One Load of Hay

Gross 18.75.

Tare 1280

Net 595

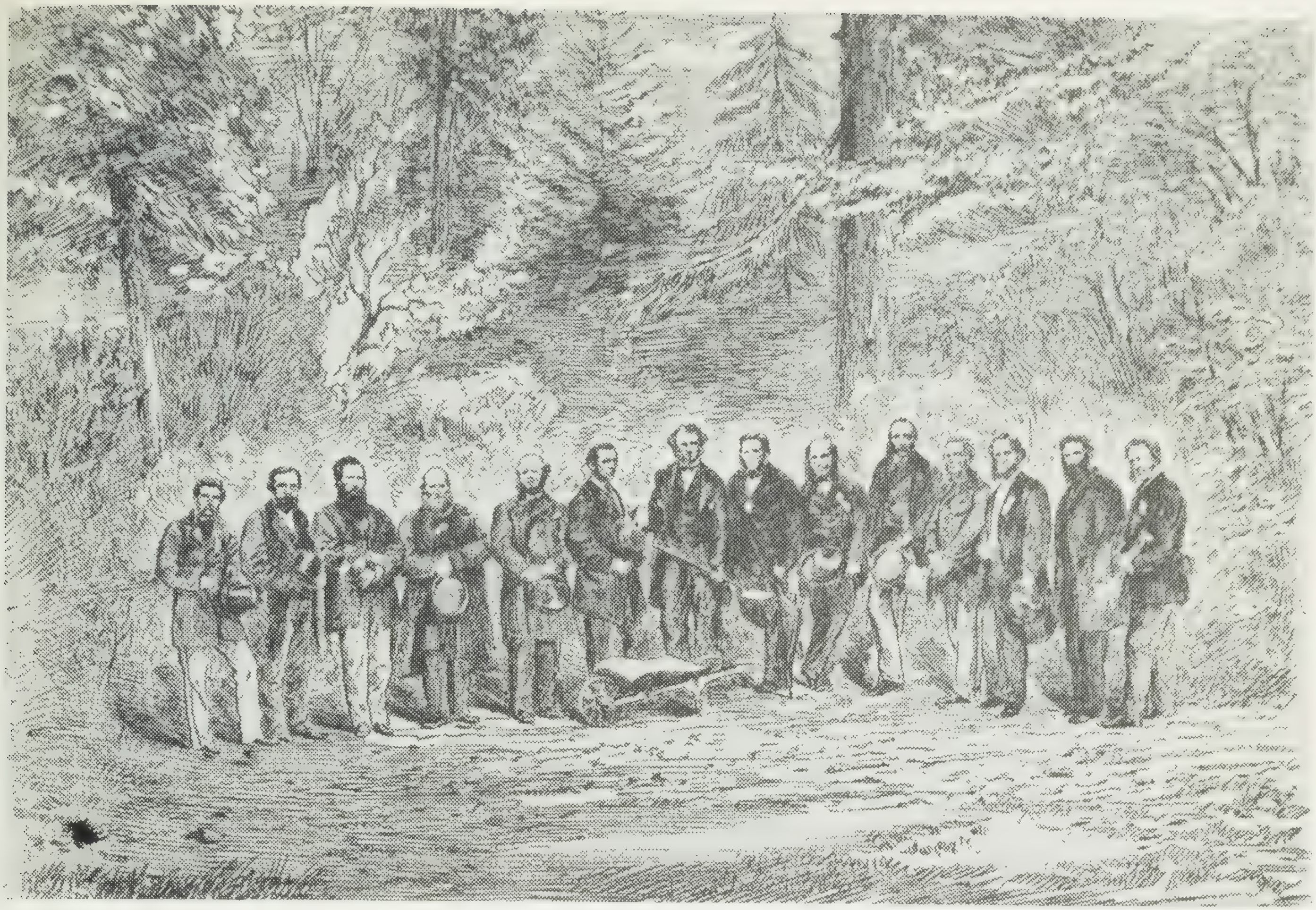
Thomas Mus

Per John Tho

HAY SCALES RECEIPT, MONTGOMERY'S HOTEL, ISLINGTON

> essentially a large, stout, coarse rake with teeth projecting both ways like those of a common revolver; a horse is attached to each end, and a boy rides each horse. A horse passes along each side of the winrow, and they thus drag this rake after them, scooping up the hay as they go. When 500 pounds or so are collected they draw it at once to the stack or barn, and the horses turning about at each end, causing the gates to make a half circle, draw the teeth backwards from the heap of hay and go empty for another load—the teeth on opposite sides being thus used alternately.

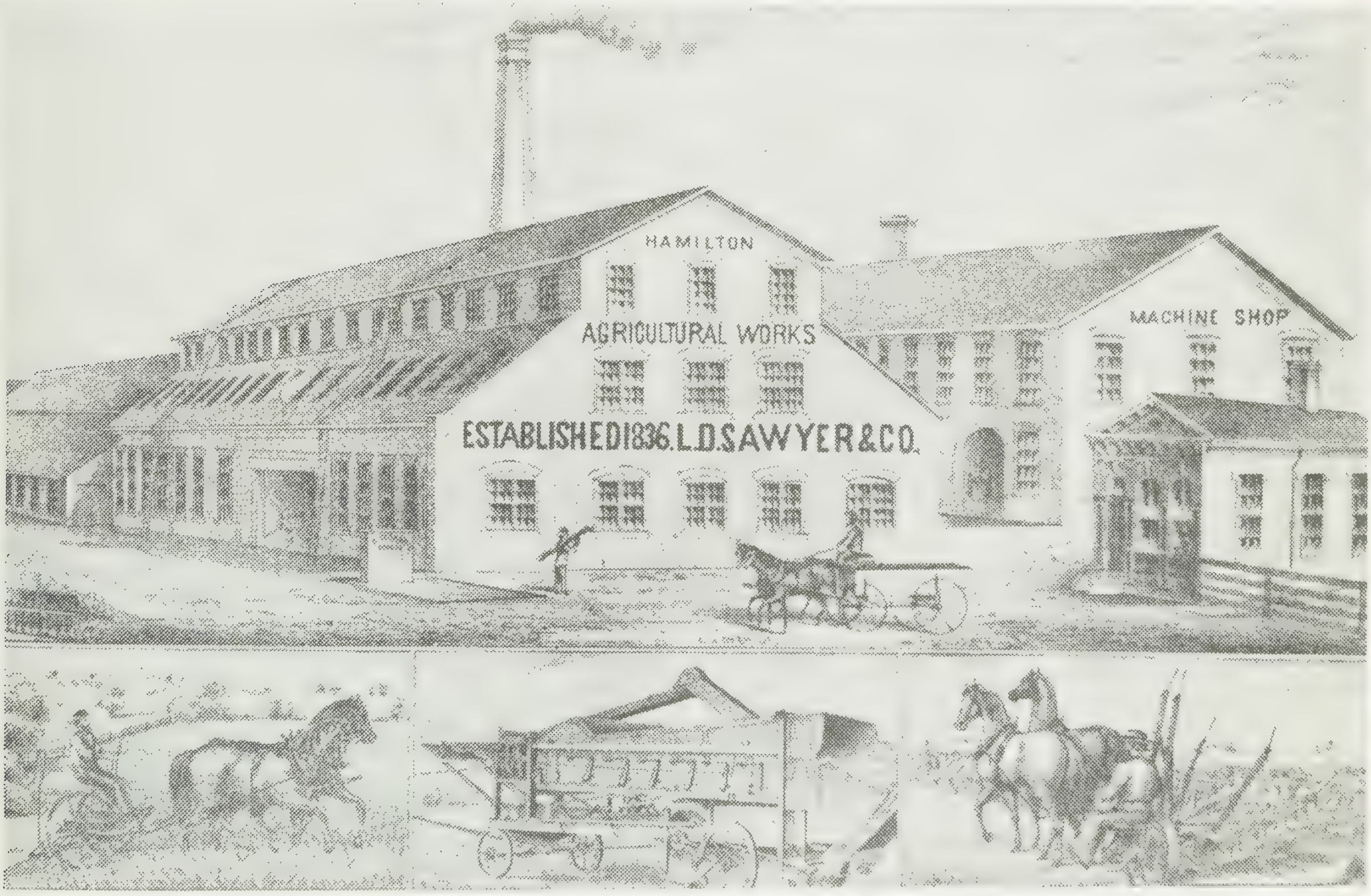
The horse-pitchfork was found valuable in constructing the stacks, as well as in the barn. A three-legged derrick with rope and blocks was employed with horse-pitchforks, and human labour was substantially lightened in the process. 'Hay caps', often laughed at as 'an effeminate parlour style of farming', were



Archives of Ontario

TURNING THE FIRST SOD, TORONTO AND NIPISSING RAILWAY, 1869

The ceremony took place at Cannington, and is depicted here by a leggotype from a photograph by Ewing of Toronto. Premier John Sandfield Macdonald officiated. The background of forest signified what the 'Iron Horse' was breaking through, and it was intensified by blotting out lesser persons in the rear.



Brant County Historical Atlas

SAWYER AGRICULTURAL WORKS, HAMILTON, 1875 yet valuable in avoiding blowing over by wind, and in shedding rain, and they did not prevent the stacks from eliminating steam.

The dinner horn, a characteristic piece of farm equipment, was used during all such work to call the menfolk to meals. 'Went to an auction of household furniture, farming stock, &c., in the neighbourhood', wrote Joseph Abbott in his diary, 'but everything sold so high that I bought nothing but a tin horn to call us home to dinner.' M. G. Scherck, in his *Pen Pictures of Early Pioneer Life,* describes many other means of calling in the men:

> At most of the farmers' houses a tin horn several feet long was kept for calling the men from their work in the fields, woods, and barn to their meals. If there was no horn many of them would hang a white cloth on a pole where the men could see it. Often the hollow tinkle of an old cow-bell served the purpose and might be heard hoarsely reverberating over the fields and clearings. Sometimes an old worn-out cross-cut saw, a big steel triangle, or the used-up mould-board of a plough were hung up to a tree and hammered on to notify the workers that dinner was ready.
>
> One of the writer's great-grandfathers had a horn made of a seashell, a conch, which is still in use in the family. Later on some of the farmers had a bell placed on the roof of the house to call the men in from their work. Its melodious tones were never an unwelcome sound to the weary worker as he toiled in the harvest field, in the logging field, or at the plough.

But a Scottish pioneer, David Martin of Beverly Township, recalled earlier days:

In the rough old times,
In the tough old times
Full thirty years agone,
There was nae a clock in the settlement
To tell how the time went on;
But we kenned very well when the day began,
And we kenned very well when 'twas o'er,
And our dinner-bell was the gude-wife's shout
*When the sun reached the nick in the door.**

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*This use of the sun's rays is a reminder of Colonel Thomas Talbot's signal to start the round of dissipation. Believing a saying that he who drank early in the morning would die a drunkard (says Sir James Alexander in *L'Acadie, or Seven Years' Exploration in British America*), 'he placed a mark on an out-building showing where the sun would cast his shadow at 11 o'clock. Long before the hour the Colonel would sit in his arm-chair gazing intently at the moving shadow. Precisely when it reached the mark, Jeffrey was ordered to produce the decanter, and the rest of the day was devoted to indulgence.' (See the author's *Early Life in Upper Canada*, pp. 117-39, for an account of Talbot and his importance in the settlement of the Lake Erie region.)

Corn was in early times the other great grain crop. Mrs. Traill wrote that it required very little attention in newly-cleared land, but more on old farms. A little hoeing when it began to branch drew the earth around the roots and cut down the weeds, but no other labour was expended upon it until the cob commenced to form, whereupon the blind and weak shoots were broken off, allowing the plant's energy to go to four or five bearing stalks. When the feather began to turn brown and dead it too was sometimes taken off, so that all the nourishment would go to the corn. But corn had its enemies:

Public Archives of Canada — Lieut. Philip Bainbrigge

BUSH FARM NEAR CHATHAM, 1840

A typical clearing with small cornpatch.

> We had a remarkable instance of smut in our corn last summer [continues the careful naturalist, Catharine Traill]. The diseased cobs had large white bladders as big as a small puff-ball or very large nuts, and these on being broken were full of an inky black liquid. On the same plants might be observed a sort of false fructification, the cob being deficient in kernels, which by some strange accident were transposed to the top feather or male blossoms. . . . I could not learn that the smut was a disease common to Indian corn, but last year smut or dust bran, as it is called by some, was very prevalent in the oat, barley, and wheat crops.

And there were other hazards, notably *breachy* cattle, who would break down rail fences to get at the corn. This was perhaps not so bad if the depredations were committed by one's own cattle, but the writer of the Abbott diary could not forbear a chuckle at the fate of his neighbour's ox:

> An ox belonging to my neighbour, being one of the cattle which broke into my corn, died of a surfeit, as was supposed, of such rich succulent food as the green corn. This made him mend his portion of the line-fence between my farm and his, which I never could get him to do before.*

A variety of birds and animals did extensive damage to grain crops, while snakes were often a menace. An early settler in Elgin County recalled that he had killed fourteen racoons and 110 squirrels in one week.

> In pioneer days [he continued] rattlesnakes were very numerous, and my brother, who was assisting to haul in oats, pitched on the load a sheaf of which I took hold, but hearing the dreaded rattle I threw it down, as far from my brother as I could. Out of the sheaf crawled a rattlesnake forty inches long, which he at sight of killed with the pitchfork and pulled off its fourteen rattles. Numerous though the venomous reptiles were, only four of the Aldborough settlers were bitten, each saved by copious draughts of the decoction of a hoar-hound and plantain and pressing salted fat pork on the wound. It was not at that time known that whiskey is, of all antidotes, the speediest and best.**

Snakes 'of a beautifully variegated colour' were especially prevalent in the Niagara region, where they often got into homes and dairies and were consequently called milk-snakes. 'Its tail, which is extremely hard and sharp,' wrote William Dalton of this species in 1820, 'is its chief instrument of defence. A wound from this is troublesome but not mortal.' That rattlesnakes and other types were exterminated in southern Ontario is due to the swine of early settlers, which viciously attacked them at every opportunity.

Deer often trampled the grain, but wild turkeys and wild pigeons were much more destructive, attacking peas, oats, and wheat in force. One settler lost five acres of oats when a large flock of turkeys settled upon them, and he recalled that of seven that were shot two weighed 22 pounds each; while mile-long flocks of pigeons often blackened the sky and swooped down upon the grain-fields.* Joseph Pickering notes that two boys were hired to keep them off Colonel Talbot's estate, and on other farms decoys were used to net them, the feathers being used for beds and the breasts salted away in barrels.

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*Modern politicians have inherited from the period of pioneering the phrase 'to keep their political fences mended', for it is well known that nothing annoys neighbours more than to have their property destroyed by other people's cattle (or children).

**Pounded crayfish, says Mrs. John Graves Simcoe in her diary (July 30, 1792), would cure rattlesnake bites. For many years these snakes were often found on Table Rock, Niagara Falls.

The Abbott diary, under date of September 27, 1819, gives the best, if not the only, account of a bee in which the settlers sought to destroy their crops' enemies at one fell swoop by a general rising of the district:

Saturday Magazine, London, England

SLAUGHTERING WILD PIGEONS, 1835

> Some years, when the nuts in the woods are plentiful, the squirrels are so numerous as to do great damage to the Indian corn, when a conspiracy like the following is entered into for the destruction of them, as well as of all enemies that may be met with whose depredations are chiefly confined to this valuable crop. All the men, young and old for miles round, form themselves into bands, each under a captain, and whichever gets the least quantity of game has to pay for a ball and supper at the village tavern for the whole, each kind of animal being reckoned according to its importance; thus the right paw of a bear counts for 400, of a racoon 100, squirrel, 1, right

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*Wild turkeys were sometimes of 30 to 35 pounds in weight. They have been extinct in Ontario since the eighteen-nineties, but in 1949 a few were re-introduced into Lambton County from stock. In the pioneer period they were most common in our Canadian 'South'—along the shore of Lake Erie, where Turkey Point is one of the place names; but they were also seen as far north as Lake Simcoe and as far east as the County of Durham. Wild pigeons disappeared about the same time in Canada, and none of the species are known to exist anywhere; but stuffed specimens may be seen in the Royal Ontario Museum. For a full description and history see Margaret Mitchell, *The Passenger Pigeon in Ontario.*

claw of a crow, woodpecker, or blue jay, 1, &c. By daylight of the morning of muster the woods were all alive with the eager hunters, and in the afterpart of the day the fields were swarming with groups of women and children, with provisions and ammunition for their several partizans and to disburden them of their spoils. It was truly a season of merry and joyous holiday, in which all business and work were suspended; many a small party spent sleepless nights watching for bears and racoons, for it is only then they come out. This lasted for three days, when we all met at the tavern to count up our spoils in trembling anxiety for the award of two judges appointed to decide upon the claim for victory. The party I belonged to had 2 bears, counting 800—4 racoons 400—473 squirrels—27 crows—105 blue jays and woodpeckers—counting altogether 1835; and yet we lost, as the other party had nearly the same besides one bear more.*

N. Currier print

HARVEST

A sympathetic treatment is given these depredators of the cornfield by the half-Indian poet Pauline Johnson, who is now regarded as one of Canada's greatest interpreters of nature:

*In the summer and autumn of 1828 black squirrels were so thick that boys killed them in great numbers with sticks or blunted arrows and sold their skins at 5s. per hundred. Among occasional animal plagues was one of weasels in the Talbot Settlement about the same time, when from six to twelve per day were killed in settlers' homes; while in 1847 the party surveying the Canada Company's 'Huron Tract' were pestered by innumerable moles or shrew-mice, though they were seldom seen afterwards.

At Husking Time

At husking time the tassel fades
To brown above the yellow blades,
Whose rustling sheath enswathes the corn
That bursts its chrysalis in scorn
Longer to lie in prison shades.

Among the merry lads and maids
The creaking ox-cart slowly wades
'Twixt stalks and stubble, sacked and torn
At husking time.

The prying pilot crow persuades
The flock to join in thieving raids;
The sly racoon with craft inborn
His portion steals; from plenty's horn
His pouch the saucy chipmunk lades
At husking time.

A hot summer produced the best corn crop. When ready it was commonly cut with a short-handled hoe or a sickle and set in shocks with a stalk tied around several armfuls; or the cobs were 'pulled and braided on ropes after the manner of onions' and hung over poles or beams in the barn. The stripping of the corn was usually the occasion of a husking bee, popular with the young people of the community, who gathered in the barn for the purpose. Walter Riddell of Hamilton Township, Northumberland County, said that the finding of a red ear permitted a young man to kiss the girl next him, 'and it is surprising how many red ears were found!'

The stalks were stood up again to dry, often in cribs of long saplings. M. G. Scherck gives the most detailed description:

> A pen picture of the farm buildings and their surroundings would not be complete without mention being made of the corn crib, which usually stood somewhere on the premises in an exposed place. It was placed on posts which raised it up from the ground several feet so that the air could circulate freely underneath. These posts were usually covered with tin or sheet iron, or had an old tin basin or pail turned upside down on the top, so as to prevent the rats and mice from getting at the corn. The sides and ends were made of slats placed several inches apart, so that the wind might have freedom to pass through and so prevent the corn from heating and getting mouldy, which it is liable to do when kept in a pile. The ears of corn, after being husked, were placed in this crib and allowed to remain there until needed for use for feeding the pigs and fattening the poultry for market. The more primitive crib was made by boring holes in the foundation logs several inches apart and placing stakes in them, on top of which put a rail to which the stakes were withed.

and sometimes withes were put across the bin to prevent it from spreading. The top was thatched with straw or covered with boards or hollowed basswood logs.*

Corn flour, or cornmeal as we call it, was prominent in the settler's diet. The porridge made from it, called *mush* or *supporne* by Americans, was popular, and corn bread or Johnny cake was also made, though generally with a mixture of wheat and corn flour. There were other characteristic corn dishes, for everyone liked cornmeal.

> In passing through a new settlement in the woods [wrote Joseph Pickering in 1826] the traveller is welcomed in every house; but perhaps he may have occasionally to sleep on a straw bed, on the floor before the fire with a blanket or two over him, and in the same room the whole family live and sleep, perhaps the only one in the house; for eating he has bread or cake, and butter and potatoes, or 'mush-and-milk' if for supper (ground Indian corn boiled in water to the consistence of hasty pudding, then eaten with cold milk). It is the favourite dish and most people are fond of it, from its wholesomeness and lightness, as a supper meal. Indian meal is also sometimes made into cakes which are called Johnny cakes, and perhaps some meat; this is the living generally of the first settling for a year or two by those who bring little other property into the woods but their own hands, with health and strength; and with these they appear the most independent and contented people in the world.

There was a gradual change in crops as the years passed. At first pre-eminent, wheat-growing gradually decreased as Ontario farms passed from grain-growing to mixed farming. The development was accentuated when the Canadian West came to dominate in the culture of wheat.** At first, too, barley and oats were prominent and increasing, but the barley crop fell away with the wheat. Great quantities of the corn crop long went to distilleries in the absence of a satisfactory place to store it. Some settlers tried pits in the ground, but it became fine winter feed for cattle only when silos were erected for storage. Built of either wood or cement, they did not become common until the last decade of the century.

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*Corn cribs are still widely used, especially in the Windsor-Chatham district of southwestern Ontario.

**Numerous farmers in more rugged regions, as well as many on good land, left Ontario at this time. Soon after Haliburton County was formed in 1874 about 1000 residents left for the Canadian West. Some abandoned fairly good farms without even attempting to sell.

CHAPTER IV

PIONEER STOCK

THE ox was not only the characteristic animal on all early farms, but often provided the means of original approach to Upper Canada. The Choates and Burnhams, New Hampshire farmers who were early prominent in Wentworth, Northumberland, and Peterborough counties, used oxen and sleighs in their long journey to the province in 1798. The trails they followed were often so narrow that the oxen had to be driven singly, but their most difficult experience was in crossing the Niagara River. This they said they accomplished by lashing a long pole to a flat-bottomed boat, securely fastening an ox to each end and making them propel the craft and its heavy load to the Canadian shore.

Oxen were, in fact, the prime need of the settler. They could haul logs or harrows or ploughs in a way that no horse would tolerate. If roots caught the equipment as they worked, oxen would stop until it was free, but horses tended to start up and break the harness. No wonder oxen were considered

> the main stay and aid of all bush work; they can bear nearly any roughness and hardship, and live on a great deal less and commoner food; can scramble over all sorts of logs, brush heaps, and stumps, and be driven through fire and smoke without alarm, and comparatively without injury.

But it is apparent from pioneer records that the animals were often grossly abused by farmers. Patrick Shirreff saw one instance of it as he travelled along the Kingston Road between Cobourg and Bowmanville:

> On our journey saw two oxen employed in walking round a pit, kneading clay for brick-making, which appeared cruelty and wasteful of animal labour, the poor animals walking up to the bellies in mud, with erect tails and extended tongues. The common mode of preparing clay being with a tree drawn by a horse or ox round a pivot, the lopped branches kneading the clay.

It was, in fact, a not uncommon comparison, in discussing a worn-out man's condition, 'He is like an old ox that is half starved through the winter and then overworked in the spring'.

Most of the oxen used in Canada came from the United States, and few bush settlers were ready for horses for five or six years at least, and sometimes not for many years longer. The price of oxen varied from $50 to $100 a yoke. It sometimes became necessary to replace one killed in an accident, but such rematching, says 'Ex-Settler', was seldom satisfactory, for they would not pull together, 'and pull kindly they certainly never will'. In fact Anne Langton relates that a near-by settler's ox got into a neighbour's field and

Currier & Ives print F. Palmer

STOCK IN THE FARM YARD — EVENING

> was fired at with salt, as 'breachy' cattle are sometimes dealt with. But either from forgetfulness or design the ramrod was left in the barrel, and the poor ox was so injured that Daniel was obliged to kill him, and not only him but his companion, for oxen do not work well together unless brought up together.

For these reasons 'Ex-Settler' considered it preferable not to purchase large and high-priced oxen for bush use; for they needed more food and care but they were not proportionately more useful. In addition to miserable treatment in the Canadian backwoods, they were as well subject to all sorts of accidents:

> Nearly every one you speak to on the subject ['Ex-Settler' continues] will tell you of a number of cows and oxen he has had killed twenty different ways. Two gentlemen in my neighbourhood had each lost within a very few months four head of valuable cattle. For me, I was very fortunate: I never lost any; but often at my busiest moment one of my oxen would be disabled by standing on some little stump or other, perhaps for a week and his foot poulticed twice a day to take down the swelling. . . . Beware of this and be on your guard against it, for you will meet with many novel and perplexing circumstances, a thousand privations and disappointments still to surmount that will try your patience and perseverance to the utmost.

In later years the high-priced oxen might well prove the best, for they were superior in ploughing long-cleared land, teaming on roads, hauling to mill, and similar work. In general, however, horses had replaced them by the mid-19th century in long-settled districts. A curious custom—if Mrs. Traill is not exaggerating—was the naming of oxen *Buck* and *Bright*, which she said were 'the names of three-fourths of all the working oxen in Canada'. Many people did not at once buy oxen, for a yoke and their driver could be hired at a dollar a day in almost any district; and this course was sometimes recommended to the bush settler, who had at first but little feed and no winter accommodation for cattle.

Cows were generally the next stock of the settler, though butter and milk were not considered a necessity, and pork was much more generally eaten than beef. 'An English Farmer', in his emigrant guidebook *A Few Plain Directions*, describes as follows the livestock of Upper Canada prior to 1820:

> The breed of horned cattle in this province is small but hardy and thrifty. The excellent pasturage which this country affords for cows gives to their milk a peculiar richness; and the butter and cheese are not surpassed in quality by any in the world. The former sells for 1s. and 1s. 3d. and the latter for 8d. and 10d. a pound of sixteen ounces. Good milch cows are sold for from 5£ to 7£ sterling each. Oxen are in general use for draught. A yoke of good oxen (two) may be bought for 16£ sterling. Beef sells for 4d. a pound.
>
> The sheep resemble the Norfolk breed in England, being rather tall and frequently horned, with *darkish* legs and faces. A flock will average each about five pounds of wool, of a *fineish** quality; and it is commonly sold for 2s. 6d. sterling a pound. Almost every farmer

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*The words *darkish* and *fineish* are emphasized as typical Americanisms to which Englishmen took exception, but there were innumerable others. In fact the vernacular or lingo that he continually heard led John Mactaggart to believe that 'genuine English is vanishing from the land. . . . In the course of a century the English will not understand the twentieth part that will be spoken here.'

keeps from 20 to 100 sheep; and as families here manufacture their own wearing apparel, blankets, etc. in a manner which does infinite credit to their ingenuity and industry, the wool is mostly consumed for those purposes. Mutton sells at 4d. and 5d. a pound.

The horses here are small, but spirited and extremely hardy. During the winter they are very much used in drawing sleighs; and when on a journey will travel with ease fifty miles a day. When cast loose they take great delight in rolling themselves in the snow, which is frequently from one to two feet deep on the level ground. A good horse will fetch from 16£ to 24£ sterling.

There is an abundance of domestic poultry in Upper Canada, the climate being very favourable to the production and rearing of it. Almost every farmer has a flock of geese.* One brood goose in general brings up ten or twelve young ones; they are similar in their habits and unanimity to those common in England but of a larger size, weighing mostly ten or twelve pounds each. Feathers are sold for 2s. 3d. per pound. . . .

Domestic dogs and cats are very numerous here. The dogs are of a mongrel breed and better adapted for the protection of the houses and farm-yards than any other purpose. Good water-spaniels would be serviceable here in shooting wild ducks.

Cattle were generally neither as good nor as high-priced as in Britain, varying in different parts of Upper Canada from $15 to $30 a head. The backwoodsman was advised to avoid improved breeds even if available, as they sometimes were along the front:

I would only take the precaution [says 'Ex-Settler'] of purchasing at first rough hardy ones, rather small sized and moderate in their price; for by such you cannot lose, having your choice either to fatten them in the woods the following summer and make 'bush' beef of them, as which they will be worth at the least your price, or to exchange them with your labourers at a handsome profit for work; and remember this barter system is one you must always have your eye upon in Canada: it is by far the most profitable mode of management. I say rough small cattle as more easily fed and more easily cared for; they can meet with less injury from the unavoidable hardships of your first winter, against the severities of which you will probably not have leisure enough to provide them protection; and less fodder, with 'browse', will support them.

Perhaps it is superfluous to explain this word of the woods, 'browse', so much of America is already known among us. However, I will venture. It is the American term for the buds, leaves, and branches of trees that cattle break off and feed on, and is the chief food of nine-tenths of the cattle in Canada. Through the summer

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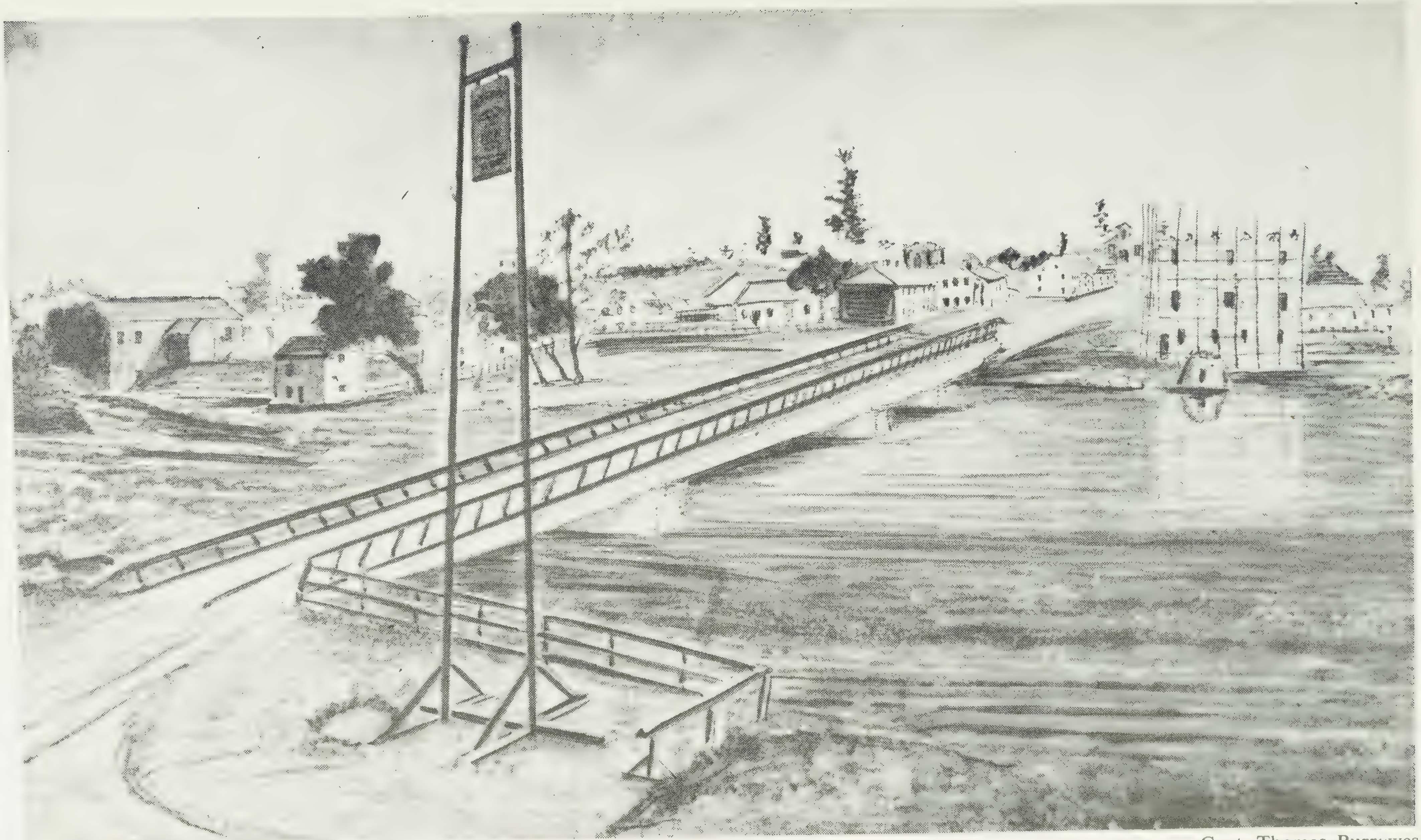
*It is apparent from this description that the old-established Loyalist farms are being described. A few years later the great period of trans-Atlantic emigration commenced, and with it the predominance once more of backwoods life with comparatively little stock.



Archives of Ontario

Capt. Thomas Burrowes

BELLEVILLE, LOOKING EAST, 1830
The sign says 'Inn and Travellers Rest'.

> the woods will thus support working cattle and fatten idle ones—that is, cattle working in moderation. During logging time, it is true, they will need something harder, as chopped oats or barley, given to them, with a couple of hours rest in the middle of the day; but in the winter, when the sap is frozen or fled and nothing but dry crackling branches with little buds left, cattle will not thrive or be able to meet your spring work without something additional every day, as a few turnips or potatoes and a little straw or hay, if only in sufficient quantity to form a cud, for winter browse will not do so; a drink, too, of Indian corn meal and water warmed is a fine thing for milch cows. I gave it to mine all last winter and found it make a very great difference.
>
> However, I have seen the cattle of poor settlers that got nothing during the entire winter but this browse, chopping of course constantly going forward, and they looked wonderfully well. It is strange how alive to its value they become, preferring it almost to any thing else. The moment your axe is heard they come running to you; and you must keep a sharp look out, for many a cow and ox in Canada is slain by a falling tree. In a few minutes they have it stripped of everything under the thickness of your finger, and then follow you to another. Maple and basswood are the best trees for browse, but they will eat any except the evergreen kinds, as pine, hemlock, cedar, &c.
>
> Bushmen are strongly impressed with the nutritive powers of this kind of food, for I have heard it asserted they are not confined to cattle. A story is told of a man named Partridge and his sister, who were among the very first settlers on the road to Penetanguishene and who became minus of all 'old country' edibles and unexpectedly cut off from any means of reaching them, having positively lived on 'browse' three weeks, boiling for themselves twice a day a pottage of maple and basswood-buds that Diogenes himself might have envied. Certainly I can vouch for the man's being alive and well, for I have been in his house and conversed with him, and, moreover, have seen him browsing very earnestly upon a piece of pork and cabbage, but cannot vouch for the truth of the whole story, not having asked him touching it; nor would I advise any settler to reckon therefrom much on 'browse' as parlour food, or even as food for cattle exclusively if he can at all procure something additional for them. The old settlers compute ten dollars to be the value of such additional food for a yoke of oxen during the winter; this is the usual price of a ton of hay in Canada, so half a ton of hay would suffice each head.

So extensive were the wanderings of stock in Upper Canada that the Reverend Isaac Fidler speculated upon whether gregarious animals had some instinct which led them to reciprocate the visits of others of their kind; and a good deal of of time was spent hunting for them. The only thing in the country, in fact, that amused his wife was

> the frequent visits which the cows and sheep of our landlady made into the forests and pastures of other people, and which her neighbours' cows and sheep made into hers. Almost every week the landlady mounted her pony and rode into the forests in quest of her live stock. Sometimes she continued seeking them for two or three days together before she found them.

Travellers were usually to blame for the facility with which the animals travelled, for they often took down rail fences as they rode or drove through people's property; and Mr. Fidler found that the situation was in no sense local but 'a common occurrence to all farmers in the country'. A traveller noted in 1820 that some farmers felled trees daily in winter so that their stock could browse on the top branches. 'They have bells upon their necks', he observed, 'which, ringing incessantly, give notice to the respective owners in what part of the wood their cattle are in. Every settler knows the sound of his own bells.'

But even when belled, cows led many a settler a long walk through rough country. Captain Hill spent a most unpleasant night in the woods when he became lost during a search for his cow. Though he was soaking wet and there was a heavy frost during the night, necessitating his keeping in motion, his mental sufferings were much worse, for he had heard exaggerated stories about wild animals.

> I considered myself in most extreme peril [he wrote]. I pictured what would become of my wife and little ones if I should never return to them. . . . I knew there were both bears and wolves in the country, and that I was then in what might be called their very camp; and I did not know, what I found afterwards to be fact, that my danger so far as they were concerned was next to none; as I believe there is not one authenticated instance where a single individual has been injured by them.*

He found next morning that he had been lost a mere half mile from his shanty, in the thickest part of a cedar-hemlock swamp which it was difficult to penetrate even in daylight; and he recommended incoming settlers 'to procure a cow that has got a calf at her side; and by confining the latter, there will be a better prospect of the mother returning regularly to be milked, at which times the calf may be allowed to draw part of the milk'.**

*John Mactaggart said the same, and it would appear that such stories fall into the category of old wives' tales.

**Some settlers put marks upon their cows and pigs to avoid arguments as to ownership that might otherwise ensue.

Many bush settlers were short of food, especially in winter. In the Peterborough district meat was almost unprocurable at first, for farm animals were scarce. Thomas Stewart, in a letter to Captain Basil Hall, said that he had gone out with an ox-team to forage, 'and after travelling an entire day returned with a couple of sheep that had not a pound of fat on them, a little pork, and a few fowls'. Mrs. Stewart refers in her letters* to the hardship, especially among her small children, of having no milk during the entire winter, though they were on a farm. Even those who had a cow let it roam in the woods, and as the milk often tasted of garlic it was considered unwholesome to use.

If ordinary grass was scarce, many bush farms had wild grasslands of two or three to fifty acres in extent. These, of course, were largely beaver meadows, created by the overflowing of rivers as a result of these animals' dams. Such marsh hay, coarse as it is, was carefully harvested and stacked by the pioneer and drawn out in early winter. It was found that the quality became better after a burning. Besides grass, a necessity for cattle was

> a little salt, or they will not thrive; and being accustomed always to get it, they become excessively fond of it. And they ought to have sheds erected for them to lie in during the winter, and so placed as to shelter them from the north-west wind, which in that country is the coldest. . . . The grass used in this country is a species called Timothy, or fox-tail grass, a sort better adapted to the climate than any other. The rye-grass commonly used in Britain has not sufficient roots to draw up nourishment for itself during the hot season, and in consequence of this is quite withered up. The Timothy, however, having tremendous roots, succeeds well in a hot climate.

But at first not nearly enough grass and hay was available for the successful raising of stock.

> So defective is the pastoral farming of Upper Canada [observed Patrick Shirreff] that almost every town or village of magnitude in the district is dependent on the United States for the sheep and cattle which are slaughtered for the use of the inhabitants. Mr. Somerville of Whitby accounted for this on the ground that all oxen reared in the country were required by new settlers to plough the soil. It is, however, quite evident that there is not a sufficient extent of cleared surface on almost any farm to graze breeding stock and provide them with proper food for winter. The rearing and fattening of animals in Canada must require such a division of labour as did not come under my notice while in the country, and the time has scarcely arrived when it can be successfully adopted. The animals of every

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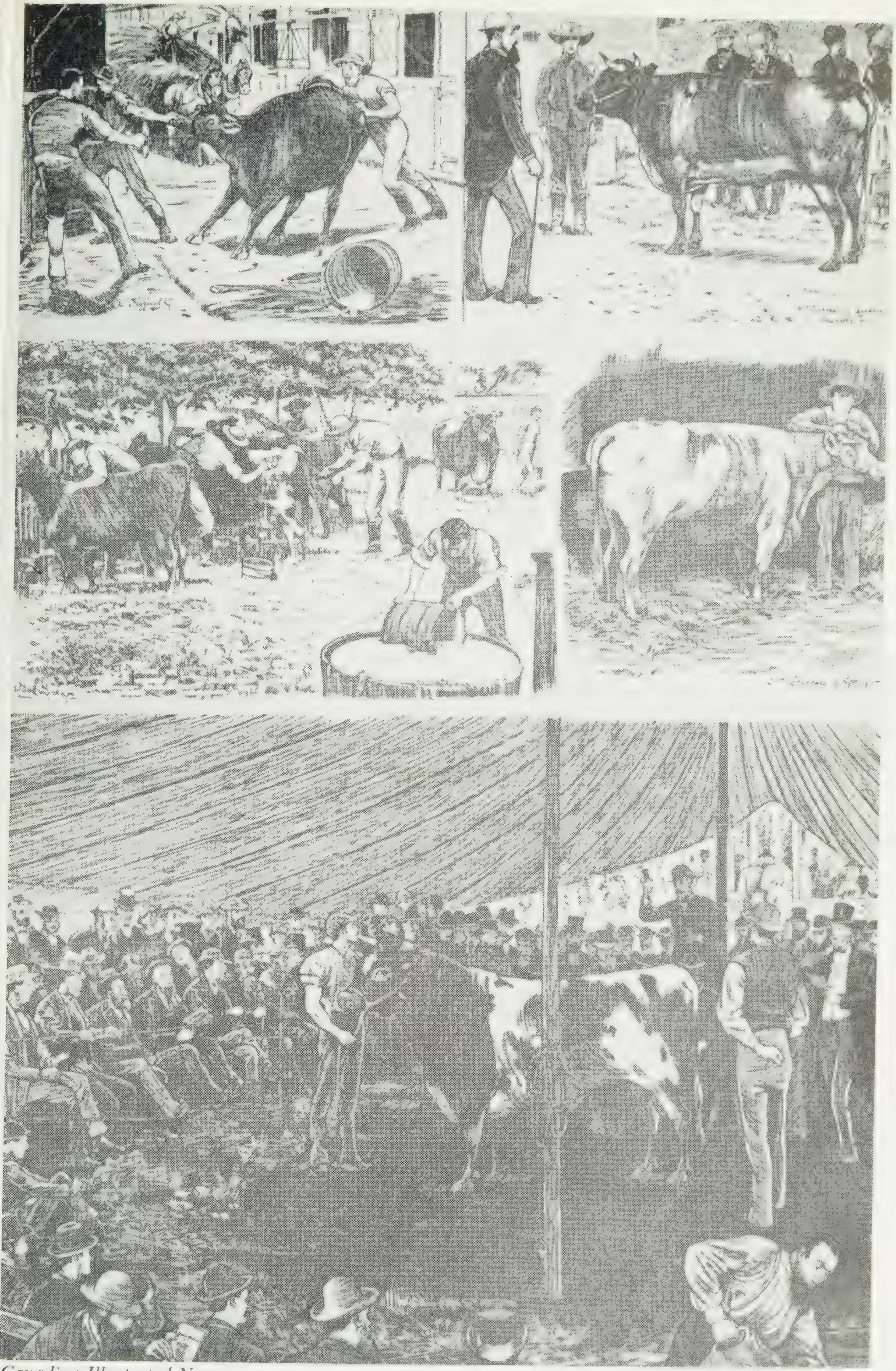
*Published under the title *Our Forest Home*, two editions of these authentic accounts of Frances Stewart's experiences of the early eighteen-twenties have been published.



Canadian Illustrated News

W. Cruickshank

SALE OF SHORT-HORNS, TORONTO, 1876

kind are of an inferior description, and no great improvement can be effected with them until proper winter food and shelter are supplied.

Where cattle-breeding was attempted various methods of feeding the calves were in use. Catharine Traill describes them:

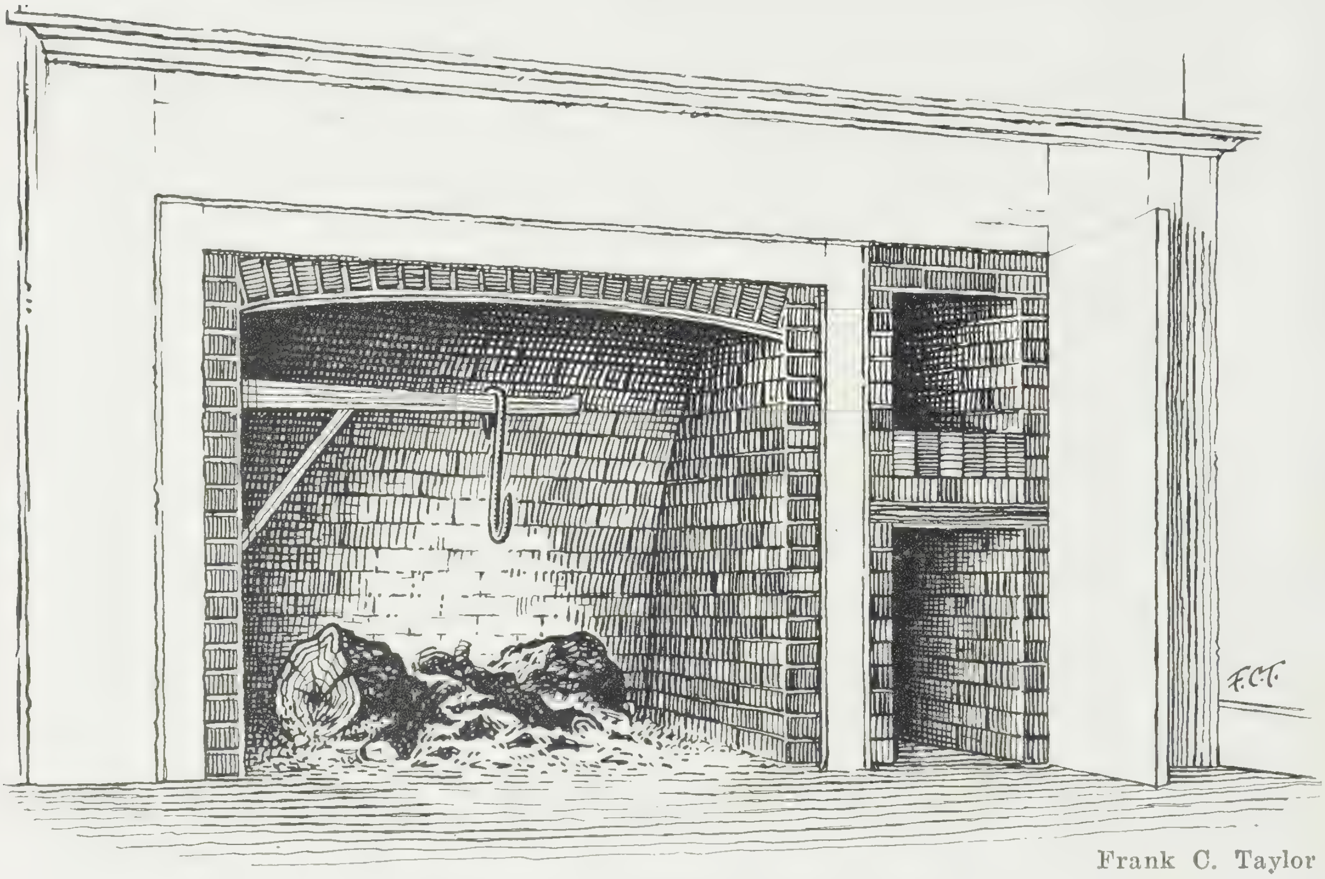
> Some persons wean the calf from the mother from its birth, never allowing it to suck at all: the little creature is kept fasting the first twenty-four hours; it is then fed with the finger with new milk, which it soon learns to take readily. I have seen cattle thus reared, and am disposed to adopt the plan as the least troublesome one.
>
> The old settlers pursue an opposite mode of treatment, allowing the calf to suck until it is nearly half a year old, under the idea that it ensures the daily return of the cow; as under ordinary circumstances she is apt to ramble sometimes for days together when the herbage grows scarce in the woods near the homesteads, and you not only lose the use of the milk, but often, from distension of the udder, the cow is materially injured, at least for the remainder of the milking season.
>
> I am disposed to think that were care taken to give the cattle regular supplies of salt and a small portion of food—if ever so little—near the milking-place they would seldom stay long away. A few refuse [*i.e.,* waste or garbage] potatoes, the leaves of the garden vegetables daily in use, set aside for them, with the green shoots of the Indian corn that are stripped off to strengthen the plant, will ensure their attendance. In the fall and winter, pumpkins, corn, straw, and any other fodder you may have, with the browse they get during the chopping and underbrushing season, will keep them well.
>
> The weanling calves should be given skimmed milk or buttermilk, with the leafy boughs of basswood and maple, of which they are extremely fond. A warm shed or fenced yard is very necessary for the cattle during the intense winter frosts. This is too often disregarded, especially in new settlements, which is the cause that many persons have the mortification of losing their stock either with disease or cold.
>
> When a new comer has not winter food for his cattle it is wise to sell them in the fall and buy others in the spring; though at a seeming loss it is perhaps less loss in reality than losing the cattle altogether. This was the plan my husband adopted, and we found it decidedly the better one, besides saving much care, trouble, and vexation.

Cows were often treated no better than oxen. They might be milked at almost any hour, or perhaps not at all for days. When the pumpkin crop was used up it was not unusual to feed cattle nothing but straw during the winter, though in long-settled districts the more advanced farmers fed them hay and turnips. A traveller, at the time in the Niagara Peninsula, said that it was ‘a pitiable sight to go about the country and see the multitudes of poor cattle, which fill almost every farmer's yards in the spring of the year'. Some were too weak to rise without assistance, and the opinion of many farmers was that in Upper Canada those cattle were ideal who could survive starvation best.

Bad care and the frosts of winter sometimes afflicted cattle with diseases like murrain and hollow horn. The murrain was relieved by boring a hole in the horn three inches from the head. Hollow horn made cattle dull and sleepy, and this condition was usually followed by pains and shaking; and while it frequently caused death it was often relieved by boring the horn and inserting turpentine and pepper to provide heat which would relieve the inflammation of the sinus from which they suffered. The ignorance and superstition of the times are evident in the belief that cattle sometimes had 'wolf-in-the-tail', and to 'kill the wolf' an incision was made near the end of the tail and a hot mixture poured in.

Seldom did the bush settler, even in the most favourable season, obtain more than half the milk per cow that would be yielded in Britain. Early settlers computed that a cow yielded daily enough milk for two pounds of cheese and one of butter; another estimate gave a cow's production as 21 quarts a week, summer and winter, enough for 3½ pounds of butter or 4 pounds of cheese. The butter, observed Patrick Shirreff, was 'often of the worst quality', and this, of course, was blamed upon the lack of grass, 'one of the greatest privations of first settlement'. 'I have been at the residence of settlers', he adds, 'who could not produce butter of their own manufacturing at the table in the fourth year of their farming.' Where milk was obtained at all it was only in spring and summer, and wild garlic, leeks, and other noxious herbs frequently made the supply unpalatable, if not entirely useless; yet in the Perth district, said the Reverend William Bell, the milk from forest-fed cows was of better quality than in Scotland, and yielded a good deal more butter. Mrs. Traill preferred to churn butter from cream, but noticed that in Canada most settlers adopted the Irish and Scotch method of churning the milk. The equipment in use was often of a primitive makeshift type.

There was a continual progression in the butter-making process. In early times cream was skimmed from standing milk, hung up in a bag, and swung around or pounded. A primitive form of barrel-churn followed, and gave way in turn to the dash-churn, with power supplied at first by dog or horse and then by steam. The introduction of the box-churn was followed by an almost continual elaboration of machinery for dairy purposes. All these changes, and the use of cold-storage warehouses pending marketing, occurred within a lifetime. As dairy farming became prominent in the later period the farmer's wife, who did most of the work, was usually allotted the receipts. Some farmers specialized in milk and butter, or perhaps entered upon the manufacture of cheese. A contemporary description of butter-making emphasizes the advantages of the churn-made product:



Frank C. Taylor

FIREPLACE WITH BAKE-OVEN

A part of the equipment of the old Half-Way House, on the Danforth Road between Cobourg and Grafton.

> Spring butter is the white butter* produced before the cows have been put out to grass, while they are still fed upon hay. This butter is to be found until the 1st of June. In June and July the butter assumes a yellow color which is owing to chlorophyll contained in the herbage of the pasture. Autumn butter (August, September, October) is also of a yellow color. Winter and spring butter should not be salted down for use during the same year, still less for use during the ensuing year. . . .

*If this had persisted, the problem of the modern competition of oleomargarine might have been avoided. Modern butter is always coloured artificially, but in Ontario it has been considered best in the interest of agriculture to prevent margarine being offered for sale coloured yellow.

> Butter made by hand is always bad; that made by churn is alone to be recommended. The churn should be entirely of wood, either pine or fir; the latter wood is to be preferred. The tub should be made without ears, and fitted with a tightly-closing cover. If the tubs have ears, the butter contained in them passes for Canadian butter on the English market, a reputation of which the Americans are careful to avail themselves. Before the butter is put into new fir tubs care should be taken to scald out the latter with an infusion of raspberry bush twigs. The same tubs should never be used twice; those that have already been used are utilised as vessels for the making of soap or for keeping it for use. One of the principal precautions to be observed in the making of good butter is to entirely remove the butter-milk full of caseine, and this can only be done effectively by powerful compression.
>
> Compression may be effected in two different manners. It is done by hand with the assistance of a rolling-pin, on a marble or birch table. Compression may also be applied by aid of a machine, and this method is infinitely superior. Machines are now sold at Montreal for the purpose, which cost only $12.*

In May 1834 the *British American Cultivator,* published in Toronto, gave an example of the enterprise and skill which characterised many a settler:

> A Yorkshire farmer, who rents a farm seven miles north of this city and pays an annual rent of fifty pounds, informed us that he only keeps ten cows, the profits from which, together with the sale of calves, pays the whole of his rent and leaves a balance in the bargain. We examined his stock and found them in comfortable winter-quarters, with an abundance of good hay and cut oats, sheaf and bran, before them, and a good supply of clean straw under their feet for bedding.

Nor was he a good dairy farmer only, for it is pointed out that when he settled there twelve years earlier he was soon getting a yield of 50 bushels of wheat an acre on land which the *natives* said would not grow 10. The *Cultivator* goes on to say that as a dairyman he went to Toronto once a week, and because of the high quality of his products he always received top prices; that he billed his customers, in accordance with the usual emphasis on credit, only once a year; and that while he had come to Upper Canada without means, he had then thousands of dollars out at interest.

Another enterprising man was James Lickley. Left an orphan in 1834, twelve-year-old James worked at various trades and in the Lower Canadian fishing industry. In 1862 at the age of

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*In the early eighteen-eighties, some twenty years after settlement, a large amount of butter was being shipped from Minden Township to Toronto.

40 he moved to Peterborough County and was first employed in the chopping and clearing of the Burleigh Road.

Noticing the scarcity of cattle among the early settlers along the road he hit upon the ingenious idea of lending cows. Each cow loaned was to be returned after three years, together with the first calf. This scheme of investing his savings in cattle proved profitable, and Lickley became something of a capitalist, with his flocks extending over a large area from Young's Point to the County of Haliburton. He was able, in fact, to take it easy and indulge in his favourite activity—hunting:

WILLIAM ELSTONE, EARLY HALIBURTON TRAPPER

> During the long sixteen years of his residence in Northern Peterborough [we are told in a valuable biographical history of the region] he has indulged in that life-long cherished sport, hunting the wild partridge, duck, and doe. He is often seen with his gun and dog, scaling the rocky heights or by the water's edge of some lake or pebbled brook in quest of fish or game.
>
> When the shades of evening gather round he retires to his humble log cabin laden with the proceeds of the day's hunt, and after placing his trusty rifle in its accustomed place over the door, prepares with his own hand his repast of partridge, venison, or other game, while his faithful dog—his only companion—sits by his side and patiently waits his share of the spoils.
>
> Mr. Lickley never married, the object of his admiration having died, and in obedience to the love he cherished for her memory never transferred his affections to another.*

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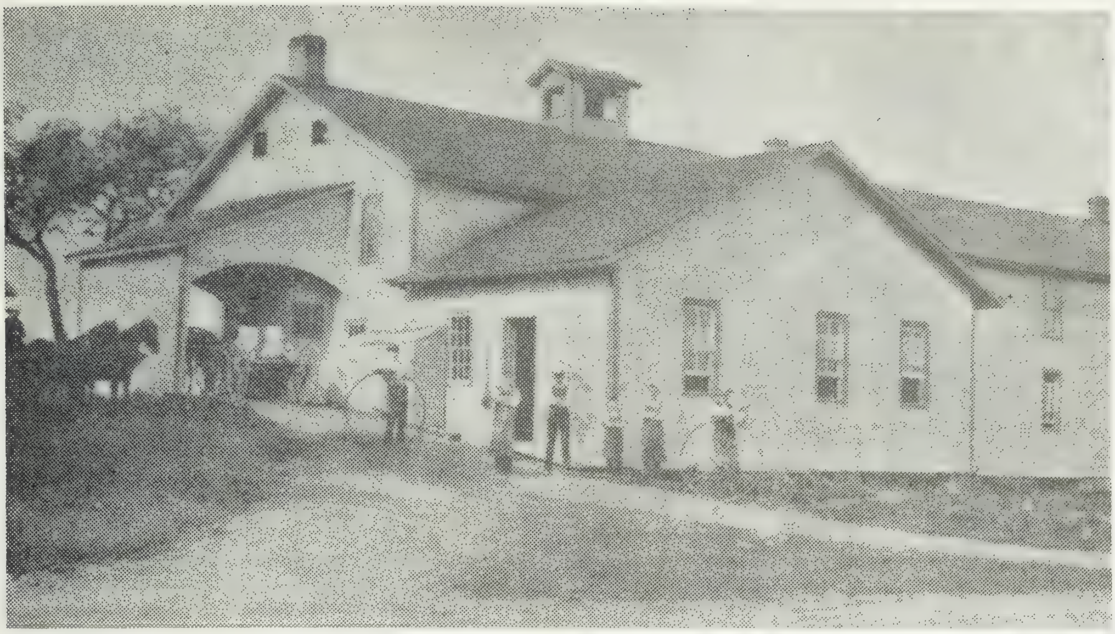
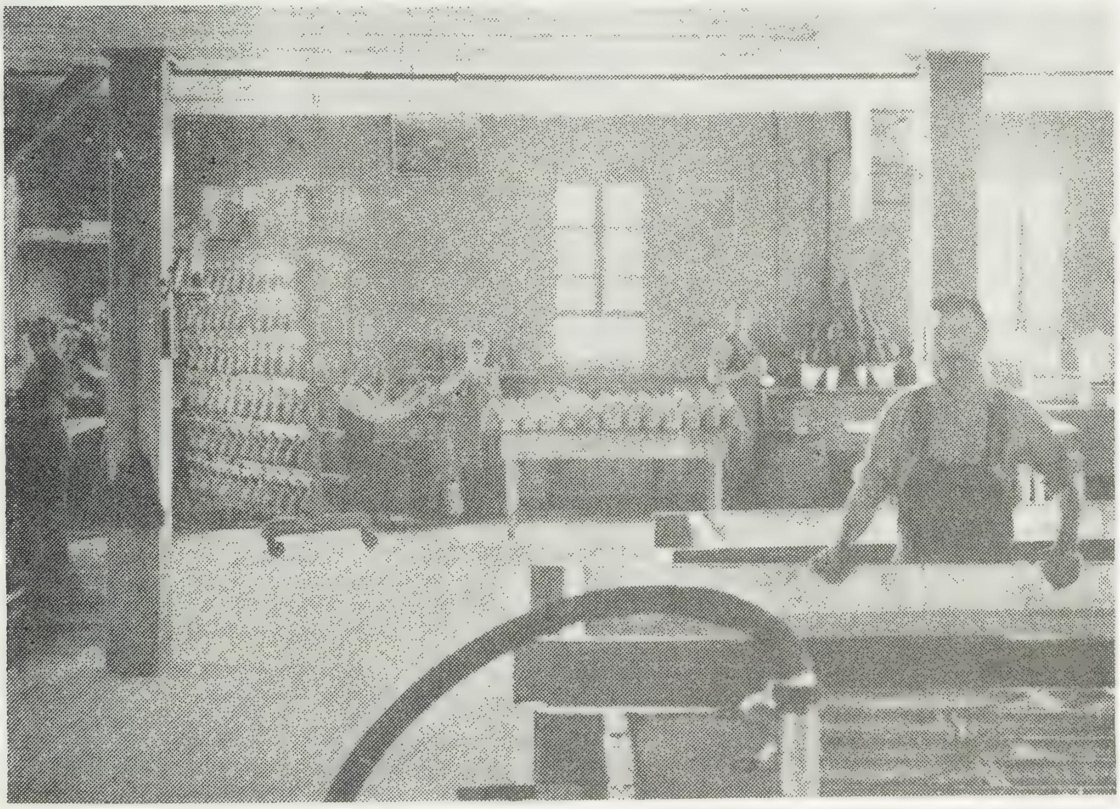
*Or, as a modern psychiatrist might put it, he had sublimated or rationalized his affection into rod and gun.



The Dominion Illustrated, 1890

CHEESE FACTORY, GLENGARRY COUNTY

Prior to World War I, cheese factories were characteristic of rural localities where dairy farming was prominent.



The Dominion Illustrated, 1890

INTERIOR OF GLENGARRY COUNTY CHEESE FACTORY

At first a domestic industry, cheese-making was found too laborious and the work became an early example of co-operative enterprise. The farmers of a district brought their milk to the cheese factory, and profits were apportioned among the members. It was comparatively easy for a factory to instal mechanical appliances, screw presses, and cheese ladders as they became available, and the flavour of the product became richer as the cheese ripened under careful supervision.

It would appear that John Backhouse, prominent early settler in Walsingham Township, in Colonel Talbot's domain, was among the first and best of early cheesemakers. In a letter he wrote to Robert Gourlay in 1817 he said he had arrived in 1794 with 500 guineas, but had but a dollar left after he had rented a farm. In fact he borrowed $500 to buy twenty cows, and a similar sum (payable at harvest-time) to provide food for his family and feed for his stock. But so successful was he that within a year or two his annual profit from butter, cheese, calves, and pigs was averaging $1550.

About the same time as butter-making on a large scale became common, cheese factories, many of them co-operative, began to dot the countryside in the longer-settled districts. Outstanding among many who made a reputation as cheesemakers is Alexander MacLaren, who at the age of 17 gave up farm life and became an apprentice with George Hamilton, pioneer dairyman in Hibbert Township, Perth County. Eventually 'MacLaren's Imperial Cheese' had a world-wide reputation, and MacLaren himself was recognized in the United States and Canada as pre-eminent in the judging of cheese at fairs and exhibitions. The perfection of the cream separator led to the replacement of many cheese factories by creameries, to which

ALLEN McINTOSH

And the original McIntosh Red apple tree.

A. F. MacLAREN

Early cheese manufacturer of Perth County.

farmers shipped their cream, keeping the skim milk for their pigs and calves.*

While most settlers provided at least a primitive winter shelter for sheep and cattle, Fred DelaFosse worked on a clearing in Muskoka where there was nothing except a small lean-to, open to the south; not even feed had been obtained for the cattle, and this in a district noted for heavy snowstorms and temperatures of 40° below zero.

> Perched on top of the small precipice where the wind had a clean sweep from the North Pole, [he wrote] it can be imagined that we suffered, but our sufferings, severe though they were, were nothing compared with those that the unfortunate beasts must have endured. I think all the sheep died that winter, and also three of the cattle. The others emerged so emaciated that they were never fit for anything afterwards. Their feed during the winter months had been hemlock boughs with an occasional sleigh-load of hay which we were able at rare intervals to obtain at exorbitant rates from one or another of the settlers. One of my liveliest recollections is the everlasting tramp, tramp, tramp of the cattle as they perambulated through the live-long nights, around and around our shanty.

John Geikie, who settled in Bidport Township, River St. Clair, gives a most vivid and realistic description of the human discomforts—not to say miseries—of extreme cold weather on the farm:

> The fire in the kitchen was enough to heat a large hall in a more temperate climate. It was never allowed to go out, the last thing at night being to roll a huge back-log, as they called it, into the fireplace with handspikes, two of us sometimes having to help to get it into its place. It was simply a cut of a tree, about four feet long and of various thickness. The two dog-irons having been drawn out and the embers heaped close to this giant, a number of thinner logs, whole and in parts, were then laid above them, and the fire was 'gathered' for the night. . . .
>
> It was grand to sit at night before the roaring mountain of fire and forget the cold outside; but it was a frightful thing to dress in the morning in the bitter cold of the bedrooms, with the windows thick with frost and the water frozen solid at your side. If you touched a tumbler of water with your toothbrush** it would often freeze in a moment, and the water in the basin sometimes froze round the edges while we were washing. The tears would come out of our eyes and freeze on our cheeks as they rolled down. The towels were regularly frozen like a board if they had been at all damp.

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*The making of butter and cheese is further described in Chapter XXXVI, where the emphasis is upon the more minute details of the processes.

**It was exceptional to use toothbrushes in the post-pioneer period, and they were seldom even heard of earlier.

> Water brought in over night in buckets and put as close to the fire as possible had to be broken with an axe in the morning. The bread was like a stone for hardness, and sparkled with the ice in it. The milk froze on the way from the barn to the house, and even while they were milking. . . . Beef and every thing of the kind were frozen solid for months together.

Sheep, and more generally pigs, were usually introduced on a bush farm when feed and some primitive type of shelter were available for them. Three or four dollars purchased a sheep, and even less bought a pig, but travellers considered Canadian stock of poor quality.

> When a field is cleared and enclosed [writes Thomas Fowler] sheep and hogs can be kept there without any attention, for the hogs in the fields get no meat but what they find for themselves, unless one or two be taken home to be fed a little better before they are slaughtered; so that it is no unusual thing to see fifty hogs in one field when it has been some time cleared and growing plenty of grass. Sheep are sometimes kept by themselves and sometimes among the cattle or hogs; but as farms vary in the extent of cleared land the stock must vary also; so that at one farm there will be ten sheep, at another twenty, at a third fifty, and at a fourth one hundred.

'Ex-Settler' had as poor an opinion of Canadian sheep as of the hogs, and advised the bringing of good ones from Britain—certainly if the emigrant intended to purchase a cleared farm. But sheep were not adaptable to bush farms, and if kept they commonly got lost in their search for grass. Cleared farms along the front, among them Colonel Talbot's, had good flocks.

> Colonel Talbot [writes his overseer, Joseph Pickering, in 1826] has just received a sample of long wool from Lincolnshire and intends procuring some of that breed of sheep, as he says government have removed all restrictions respecting the exportation of sheep. I think the Leicester sheep better adapted to this country in every respect; they are not so liable to get entangled in the woods with their wool, or to get cast on their backs, requiring less food and a shorter pasture and being more active to leap logs, &c., and yet a sufficient length of wool; but Southdowns, with regard to subsistence, would do better than either, and perhaps in some other respect (a few at least), as finer wool is getting more in request. . . .
>
> Is it not singular and peculiar to this country that sheep never have the scab or the maggot? Nor have I heard of any rotting! Still it is not properly a sheep country till more cleared—except on the plains, and there but few are kept. Generally, through the new-settled parts of the province, each farmer has from five or six to twenty or thirty, and in some instances to fifty or sixty, but rarely more.

Like the other animals, sheep had little or no care in summer and the barest shelter in winter—perhaps merely pea-straw; but occasionally corrals were built to keep them safe from attack. Wild animals, and later vicious dogs, caused considerable loss, an early settler in Elgin County losing thirty-five to wolves in one day.* But there was no foot-rot in Upper Canada, as in many countries, and the sheep produced two crops a year—lambs and wool. Just as handloom weavers made good choppers—either right- or left-handed—because of their facility in throwing the shuttle, so tailors usually became expert sheep-shearers.

There was little demand for mutton, partly because of defective butchering, and prices for wool were low; so sheep did not greatly increase in number until the eighteen-fifties. As late as 1853 half of the wool in an advanced county like Prince Edward was manufactured in the homes; and a three-day wool fair at Ingersoll in 1848 resulted in most of the wool being exchanged for cloth, not bought.

Initiative and enterprise characterised many a pioneer. It is recorded of Zacheus Burnham, who chopped himself out a clearing near Cobourg just as the 18th century was drawing to a close, that he almost cut a foot off the first winter; and that he lost his stock not once but several times; but persevering undaunted by difficulties, he had eventually a fine 600-acre farm adjoining the Court House to the northwest of the village:

> To raise a flock of sheep and collect a few cattle [we are told] was the labor of many years. . . . After several years' labor and privations Mr. Burnham succeeded in purchasing two ewes. These were either lost or destroyed; then he travelled at least 100 miles and brought home two more—one of these died, the other lived to produce lambs, but these were all destroyed by the pigs. At last he managed to purchase half a dozen sheep, and part of these he lost. At length he had raised wheat enough to buy a cow and a yoke of oxen, and from this time he began to prosper. When the war broke out with the United States in 1812 Mr. Burnham's was almost the only farm along the road where supplies could be obtained and troops on the line of march quartered and provided for. This afforded him a good market

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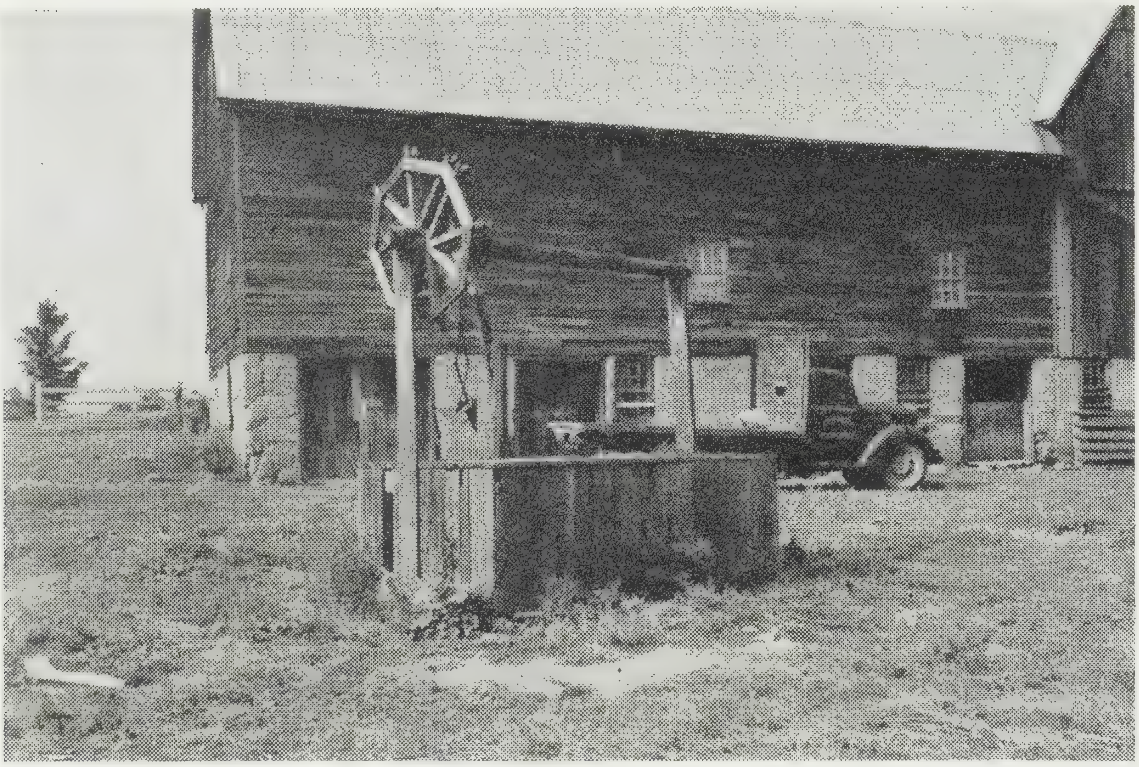
*There are stories of early settlers being devoured by bears and wolves, notably in Higgins' *The Life and Times of Joseph Gould*, Chapter IV, but the book, though full of sound and fury and 'grand doings', is unconvincing and lacking in substance. John Mactaggart says in his *Three Years in Canada* (1829): 'I have never heard of any one being disturbed by bear, wolf, or wild cat.' There are, of course, plenty of stories of the prowess of early settlers who entered upon fights with bears, as the one relative to Thrasher's Corners, Hastings County, where 'old Thrasher' is said to have fought with two full-grown bears and killed both with a club.

> for his spare cattle and surplus produce. . . . It was supposed that Mr. Burnham died worth $1,000,000, . . . but even half that amount . . . makes him to have been one of the most wealthy—and certainly not one of the least useful—men in the Province.

'Ex-Settler' advised immediate purchase of pigs to save the $13 expended per barrel (200 lbs.) of pork. Pigs about to farrow were best for the backwoodsman, and the forest provided almost all the feed.

> If you have any little idle hands about you [he wrote], there are plenty of green succulent things, acorns, &c., to be gathered in the woods, in addition to the rubbish of your house, and you will find the saving well worth any trouble they cause by taking it; you may have, shortly after your first crop of Indian corn and potatoes, some hundreds of pork fit for the barrel, and much more progressing, and I know of nothing to which attention will so speedily repay you. When your fences are good you may turn your pigs out into the woods as you do your black cattle; and during all the time the trees are green they will give you no more trouble—except the old ladies, who must get something every evening: a little salt, some potato rinds, or some garden rubbish will suffice to induce their regular return home, and the younger parts of the family of course follow, but to them you need give nothing. This must not be omitted, and before you turn them out you should go round your fence and carefully examine if it be perfectly pig-impervious, for they will certainly seek information on the same subject with great industry and per-



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

HOG-KILLING STAND NEAR QUEENSBOROUGH

severance. And here I would again remark the superiority of a log fence. If you have a fence of good straight logs and well laid you need not care though the learned pjg himself were outside of it starving and your best crop within. In the 'bush' they are certainly the best: in the cleared country you will not see them, for it would be too expensive and laborious to haul heavy logs to a distance.

Now touching the pigs of Canada, believe me they are a vile degenerate race. I can compare one of them to nothing but a small greyhound with the great head of a rhinoceros, and their ears are like huge plaintain leaves. If ever you see a respectable one he is nearly a curiosity, and raises all, if not in rank, pretty considerably in price that are within thirty degrees of kindred to him. You may be very certain nothing will pay you better than bringing out pigs of a really good kind; the trouble of a pair of small ones, at all events, is not much. You can have a strong box made for them, raised stoutly in front that a jolt or blow may not break it easily; their food will be very trifling—some coarse biscuit sweepings which you will get for very little in any seaport, steeped, may form the chief part of it. Of course they ought to be taken sufficient care of to prevent their growth being injured.* You can easily have them brought up country in the steamers with yourself, and on the top of the stages for the short distance you have to travel thus, for very little; and for several years at least you will get any price for those you have to sell. I was always asked, for a pig of the only decent breed near me, three times the price of a common one of the same age and height. Pigs, too, are worth improving in Canada, Indian corn is so noble food for them. The pork of America is the best meat I have ever seen in any country—lightly pickled and well dressed it is a dinner for an emperor; not at all the same species of potato-meat—oily, rancid, and soft—that passes with us under the same name, but fine juicy meat and hard horny fat.

The need for a log fence to keep hogs from roaming is understandable, for Mrs. Traill calls them 'great plagues, . . . a terrible annoyance both to your own crops and your neighbour's—if you happen to be within half a mile of one'.** For it was usual to let them range in the woods at will until within a few weeks of killing time, when they were shut up and fattened on buttermilk, garbage, Indian corn, potatoes, peas, and pumpkins. An entry in the Abbott diary describes the preparation of feed for hogs and the making of a hog-trough:

September 27th.—Commenced steaming pumpkins for my hogs—shut them up—threshed 5 bushels of peas and oats, had them ground to mix with the pumpkins—fed the hogs with raw food for some weeks before—made a hog-trough by hollowing out a pine log.

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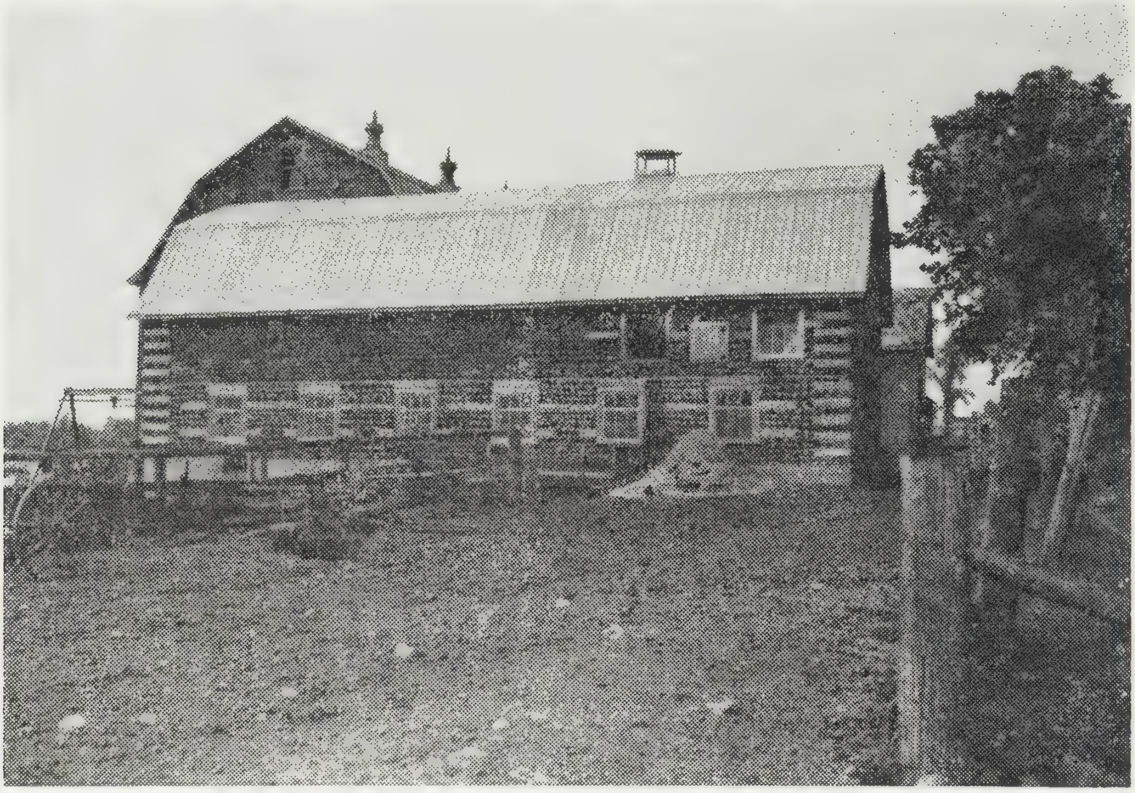
*The better sailing-ships might have stalls for animals on deck, but on emigrant ships they would be in the steerage with the passengers and their baggage, so it is to be hoped that not many took the advice to bring pigs.

**The first Town Meeting in Sydney Township, Hastings County, put the regulation (or lack of it) this way: 'Hogs is to be free commons till they done damage.'

John Geikie calls the usual variety of swine in western Upper Canada 'shingle pigs'. If one didn't have them himself his neighbours were certain to, and as they could squeeze through almost any opening they were a great nuisance. With 'wicked eyes' and cunning ways, 'as thin as a slate, with long snouts, long coarse bristles, and a belly like a greyhound', they were altogether 'a horrible breed' and 'as different from an English pig as can be imagined'. No pigs were quite so expert at rooting and uprooting, and they could break down rail fences, ran like horses, and defied all efforts to fatten them.



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

PIG HOUSE OF BUTT LOGS

On the Sullivan farm near Chesterville.

James Logan describes a fatal disease that attacked his brother's pigs:

> There is a disease among the pigs which, so far as I could learn, has not got a name. Two fine brood swine belonging to my brother, one of them having fourteen pigs, died of it while I was with him. It seems of a spasmodic nature: the animal suffers much pain, and dies in four or five hours from the commencement of the symptoms. No cure has been discovered. Water and salt, and cutting the ear and tail, were tried but without effect.

Horses, while common enough in the depths of 'the Bush', were not nearly so well adapted as oxen to the heavy work of pioneering. In 1810 there were 9982 horses of 3 years and older in the province, as well as 18,445 cows and 5991 oxen of 4 years or older. In 1817 the Midland District, one of the more advanced, had 3600 horses over two years old, 100 oxen over four years old, 6185 milch cows, and 1654 head of cattle over two years—an indication that much of the region had progressed from bush to cleared-farm stage. In 1836 there were in the whole province 42,958 horses, 99,823 milch cows, and 35,795 young cattle.

A good farm horse was worth $75, while in the towns a carriage horse cost $150 and upwards. In general they were better and cheaper in Lower Canada, largely because many of the original Norman stock remained.

> In the upper province the horses are more like ours [wrote 'Ex-Settler' in 1835], but rather smaller sized and showing more blood, which, with their switch tails, gives them a very pretty appearance. They are for the most part brought in from the States, and can be had, the best, for about £45 sterling the pair matched, which is the highest price through the country; but in some of the towns there are, as with us, fancy horses and fancy prices and a little of the rivalry in the dash and appearance of horses and equipages so common in Europe, particularly in the winter season when the sleighs and bells and furs of grandees are wont to delight the eye and ear. I have known several who paid 50 guineas and upwards for their horses each in Toronto, but what is that to a 'bush settler'? . . . .
>
> But for the general purposes of the 'bush', horses are not by any means adapted, nor, except for pleasure as I have mentioned, will you do well to bring them into it until you have ploughing or some such work for them to do and hay or grass to feed them, though they, too, run in the woods like all other trans-Atlantic animals; and I have seen them look plump and well after a summer during which they had gotten nothing but what they had gathered there.

The three main types of horses in early Upper Canada were Conestogas, French Canadians, and Indian ponies. The ponies were found in great herds, running almost wild near the Grand River and belonging to the Mohawk Indians there. H. W. Herbert, at that time a leading authority on North American horses, describes a journey of 600 miles in Upper Canada in 1831, when two stallions of this breed hauled him by wagon over 'execrable' roads at the rate of 60 miles a day for ten days in succession. Except for their small size these horses, wrote Herbert in his *Frank Forester's Horse and Horsemanship,*

> had all the characteristics of pure Canadians. . . . They had the same bold carriage, open countenance, abundant hair almost resembling a lion's mane, the same general build, and above all the same iron feet and legs. . . .
>
> I was new at the time in America, and was much surprised and interested by the performance of this gallant little pair of animals. They were perfectly matched both in size and color, very dark brown, were twelve hands and a half in height; and where the road was hard and good could spin along at nearly nine miles in the hour. They were very merry goers.
>
> It was their wonderful sure-footedness, sagacity, and docility, however, which most delighted me. They were driven without blinkers or bearing reins, and where, as was often the case, bridges seemed doubtful, the bottom of miry fords suspicious of quagmires, or the road otherwise dangerous, they would put down their heads to examine, try the difficulty with their feet, and when satisfied, would get through or over places which seemed utterly impracticable.

On well-ordered farms there was a regular routine of chores in the care of stock. A December entry in the Abbott diary could have been duplicated for innumerable farmers, and especially on farms which had long been cleared and improved:

> *December 16th to 18th.*—Same work; feeding and watering cattle; cutting a supply of firewood at the door, cleaning out the stables, &c. occupied a little of our time while the breakfast was being got ready, when we came home to dinner, and at night after finishing our day's work. The horse was always groomed, fed, &c. with candle-light* after supper, when the working oxen had also a little fresh hay given them. All which having to be attended to in the same way every day during winter, I shall not again advert to it.

Prior to the middle of the century very ordinary poultry were kept, if any at all, for there was no demand for either fowl or eggs except in the towns. An occasional 'gentleman farmer' brought in foreign breeds, one near St. Catharines in 1847 having quite a variety of geese, ducks, pheasants, guinea hens, and even prairie hens. But the 'Shanghai mania' or 'hen fever' came to the United States in 1849 and reached Upper Canada about three years later; and Russian, French, and British hens, geese, and ducks were soon in innumerable farmyards. Of the hens the Dorkings and Brahmas proved most satisfactory and the Cochins least; while general favourites in later years—the Plymouth Rocks and White Leghorns—were introduced in the 'sixties and 'seventies, respectively. The *Canada Farmer* of April 1, 1864, carried an article on the respective merits of

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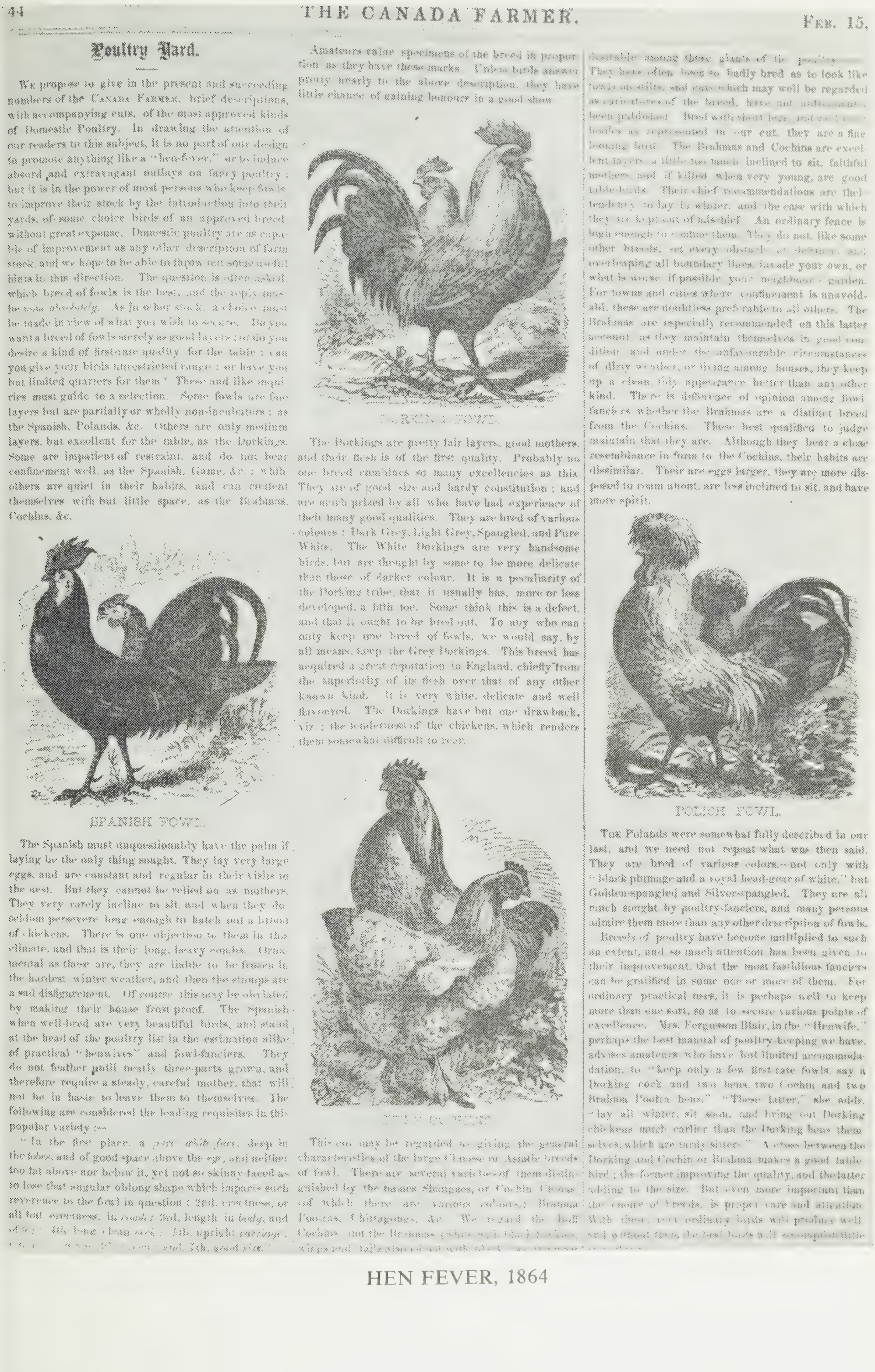
*Presumably a candle-lantern was used. Coal oil did not come into use until the eighteen-fifties.



Poultry Yard.

We propose to give in the present and succeeding numbers of the CANADA FARMER, brief descriptions, with accompanying cuts, of the most approved kinds of Domestic Poultry. In drawing the attention of our readers to this subject, it is no part of our design to promote anything like a "hen-fever," or to induce absurd and extravagant outlays on fancy poultry; but it is in the power of most persons who keep fowls to improve their stock by the introduction into their yards, of some choice birds of an approved breed without great expense. Domestic poultry are as capable of improvement as any other description of farm stock, and we hope to be able to throw out some useful hints in this direction. The question is often asked, which breed of fowls is the best, and the reply must be one *absolutely*. As in other stock, a choice must be made in view of what you wish to secure. Do you want a breed of fowls merely as good layers; or do you desire a kind of first-rate quality for the table; can you give your birds unrestricted range; or have you but limited quarters for them? These and like enquiries must guide to a selection. Some fowls are fine layers but are partially or wholly non-incubators; as the Spanish, Polands, &c. Others are only medium layers, but excellent for the table, as the Dorkings. Some are impatient of restraint, and do not bear confinement well, as the Spanish, Game, &c.; while others are quiet in their habits, and can content themselves with but little space, as the Brahmas, Cochins, &c.

SPANISH FOWL.

The Spanish must unquestionably have the palm if laying be the only thing sought. They lay very large eggs, and are constant and regular in their visits to the nest. But they cannot be relied on as mothers. They very rarely incline to sit, and when they do seldom persevere long enough to hatch out a brood of chickens. There is one objection to them in this climate, and that is their long, heavy combs. Ornamental as these are, they are liable to be frozen in the hardest winter weather, and then the stumps are a sad disfigurement. Of course this may be obviated by making their house frost-proof. The Spanish when well-bred are very beautiful birds, and stand at the head of the poultry list in the estimation alike of practical "henwives" and fowl-fanciers. They do not feather until nearly three-parts grown, and therefore require a steady, careful mother, that will not be in haste to leave them to themselves. The following are considered the leading requisites in this popular variety:—

"In the first place, a *pure white face*, deep in the *lobes*, and of good space above the *eye*, and neither too fat above nor below it, yet not so skinny-faced as to lose that angular oblong shape which imparts such reverence to the fowl in question; 2nd, erectness, or all but erectness, in *comb*; 3rd, length in *body*, and of *leg*; 4th, long clean *neck*; 5th, upright *carriage*; [illegible] 7th, good *size*."

Amateurs value specimens of the breed in proportion as they have these marks. Unless birds answer pretty nearly to the above description, they have little chance of gaining honours in a good show.

DORKING FOWL.

The Dorkings are pretty fair layers, good mothers, and their flesh is of the first quality. Probably no one breed combines so many excellencies as this. They are of good size and hardy constitution; and are much prized by all who have had experience of their many good qualities. They are bred of various colours: Dark Grey, Light Grey, Spangled, and Pure White. The White Dorkings are very handsome birds, but are thought by some to be more delicate than those of darker colour. It is a peculiarity of the Dorking tribe, that it usually has, more or less developed, a fifth toe. Some think this is a defect, and that it ought to be bred out. To any who can only keep one breed of fowls, we would say, by all means, keep the Grey Dorkings. This breed has acquired a great reputation in England, chiefly from the superiority of its flesh over that of any other known kind. It is very white, delicate and well flavoured. The Dorkings have but one drawback, viz.: the tenderness of the chickens, which renders them somewhat difficult to rear.

[illegible]

This cut may be regarded as giving the general characteristics of the large Chinese or Asiatic breeds of fowl. There are several varieties of them distinguished by the names Shanghaes, or Cochin Chinas (of which there are various colours,) Brahma Pootras, Chittagongs, &c. We regard the Buff Cochins, not the Brahmas (which with black hackles, wings and tails [illegible] with [illegible]) [illegible] desirable among these giants of the poultry-yard. They have often been so badly bred as to look like fowls on stilts, and cuts which may well be regarded as caricatures of the breed, have not unfrequently been published. Bred with short legs, and with large bodies as represented in our cut, they are a fine looking bird. The Brahmas and Cochins are excellent layers, a little too much inclined to sit, faithful mothers, and if killed when very young, are good table-birds. Their chief recommendations are their tendency to lay in winter, and the ease with which they are kept out of mischief. An ordinary fence is high enough to confine them. They do not, like some other breeds, set every obstacle at defiance, and overleaping all boundary lines, invade your own, or what is worse if possible your neighbour's garden. For towns and cities where confinement is unavoidable, these are doubtless preferable to all others. The Brahmas are especially recommended on this latter account, as they maintain themselves in good condition, and under the unfavourable circumstances of dirty weather, or living among houses, they keep up a clean, tidy appearance better than any other kind. There is difference of opinion among fowl fanciers whether the Brahmas are a distinct breed from the Cochins. Those best qualified to judge maintain that they are. Although they bear a close resemblance in form to the Cochins, their habits are dissimilar. Their are eggs larger, they are more disposed to roam about, are less inclined to sit, and have more spirit.

POLISH FOWL.

THE Polands were somewhat fully described in our last, and we need not repeat what was then said. They are bred of various colors,—not only with "black plumage and a royal head-gear of white," but Golden-spangled and Silver-spangled. They are all much sought by poultry-fanciers, and many persons admire them more than any other description of fowls.

Breeds of poultry have become multiplied to such an extent, and so much attention has been given to their improvement, that the most fastidious fanciers can be gratified in some one or more of them. For ordinary practical uses, it is perhaps well to keep more than one sort, so as to secure various points of excellence. Mrs. Fergusson Blair, in the "Henwife," perhaps the best manual of poultry-keeping we have, advises amateurs who have but limited accommodation, to "keep only a few first rate fowls, say a Dorking cock and two hens, two Cochin and two Brahma Pootra hens." "These latter," she adds, "lay all winter, sit soon, and bring out Dorking chickens much earlier than the Dorking hens themselves, which are tardy sitters." A cross between the Dorking and Cochin or Brahma makes a good table bird; the former improving the quality, and the latter adding to the size. But even more important than the choice of breeds, is proper care and attention. With these, very ordinary birds will produce well, and without them the best birds will accomplish little. [illegible]

HEN FEVER, 1864

Muscovy, Aylesbury, and Rouen (Rhone) ducks. Mrs. Traill found that depredations upon fowl were from a variety of enemies:

> Besides a fine brood of fowls, the produce of two hens and a cock (or *rooster,* as the Yankees term that bird), I have some ducks and am to have turkeys and geese this summer. I lost several of my best fowls—not by the hawk but a horrid beast of the same nature as our polecat, called here a skunk; it is far more destructive in its nature than either fox or the hawk, for it comes like a thief in the night and invades the perch, leaving headless mementoes of its barbarity and bloodthirsty propensities.

Wolves, weasels, and even eagles were also known to carry fowl off, and some poultry froze to death from insufficient protection in winter. T. W. Magrath wrote that they often had their toes frozen off during heavy frosts. They were 'pitiable objects' as they walked disconsolately about unable to scratch, but it was an advantage that the seeds of early spring were not so readily dug up.

Frequent efforts were made, particularly in southwestern Upper Canada, to domesticate wild turkeys. The eggs were hatched or the young taken from the nests, but the well-known difficulties in raising turkeys were even greater with respect to the wild variety, and there was very little success.

The stages by which a bush lot progressed to the cleared or improved farm varied with the enterprise and energy of the proprietor. A few more acres logged and burned and fenced each winter, a new and improved barn raised, a few more cattle and hogs purchased, space set aside for vegetables, a new house or a verandah on the old with vines at the corners, and a few flowers set out from seeds a friend had sent from Old England —these were the landmarks in the typical farm's history.

Adam Fergusson, prominent Scottish agriculturist, noted the fine improved farms he saw in the early eighteen-thirties in the Waterloo district: 'Springs and brooks were to be seen in abundance, . . . leisure had been found to grub out the black stumps so offensive to the eye of an old-country farmer; the live-stock, too, evinced, by their size and condition superior management and food'. Their German owners had been settled twenty years, and some fine farms could be purchased at $25 an acre.

Anna Jameson similarly noted the grazing farm of 'John B——', something rather unusual in pioneer Upper Canada. Out of 160 acres 100 were 'cleared and laid down in pasture', with 30 cows and 80 sheep; but wolves were a great annoyance, having carried off 8 of his sheep, as well as 13 of his brother's (in Canada the bounty for wolves was only $6 for each head, while it was from $15 to $20 in the United States). But his wife, 'clever in the dairy', sold both butter and cheese, and they were prosperous and contented.

A glance at farm prices in 1860 will enable comparison with those of today. Wheat was 90 cents a 60 lb. bushel, peas 55 cents, oats 22 cents for a 34 lb. bushel, and barley 60 cents for a 56 lb. bushel; potatoes averaged 25 cents a bushel. Beef was from 4 cents to 7 cents per pound. A six-weeks-old pig sold for a dollar in the spring, and with but little cost for feed during the summer would, if of 200 lbs., bring ten dollars in the fall. Eggs were 15 to 20 cents a dozen, butter a little less per pound, while fowls were available at 10 cents each, and large turkeys at 45 cents.

Thirty to thirty-five years earlier these farm products varied but little in price, though possibly slightly less on the average. At other times they were more or less, depending upon commercial conditions and the extent of farm crops. Even early in the present century butter and eggs were often such 'a drug on the market' (the common way of expressing it) that they brought less than half of the price a century earlier, a condition due largely to defective marketing, lack of grading, and the current system of trade between farmer and merchant. Many a merchant overloaded his cellar with butter and eggs to avoid offending farmer-customers, and most of it rotted from lack of demand.

The improvement of farm stock by importation of the best breeds is exemplified by what occurred in Hamilton Township, County of Northumberland, as recorded in the diary of a highly public-spirited farmer, Walter Riddell. The first improved stock, he says, resulted from encouragement by the Northumberland County Agricultural Society. Horses were improved by importation of good stock, not only by the County society but by encouragement of the Hamilton Township society, which awarded prizes for the best. A number of farmers were prominent in importing Clydesdales, Percherons, and other good draught breeds, and these types were prominent in the towns in hauling the heavy drays of freight and merchandise.

Robert Wade brought the first Durham cattle to the county, and he and his sons were long prize-winners at cattle shows. The county's exhibitors, in fact, were prominent at every Provincial Exhibition. Thomas Eyre brought in the first Devon bull, Ayrshires were introduced by Robert Brown, and Galloways by William Roddick in 1854. Not until nearly the end of the century were Holsteins and Jerseys imported.

Walter Riddell describes the first sheep as of common breed but 'very useful, white-faced, with fine rather short wool, and when killed proved to be in better condition than one would judge from their appearance'. Robert Wade first brought in an improved breed, the Teeswaters, in 1837, and a few years later William Brown imported some Leicesters. In 1854 the Roddick farm had a flock of Cheviots, and Thomas Taylor some Southams, but neither proved popular. There were small flocks of Southdowns and Shropshires, but fine-wooled sheep were never favourites.

Swine-breeders were not notable in Hamilton Township, but Suffolks, Berkshires, and Yorkshires, as well as various cross-breeds, were found on some of the best farms.

Prior to 1840 stock, excepting horses, were seldom kept in barns, but were commonly allowed to look after themselves on the sheltered side of straw-stacks. Experience is a great teacher, and two notably severe winters, 1835-36 and 1843-44, caused such heavy losses among cattle that shelters soon became usual for protecting stock over the winter, though great barns and stables were a much later development.

The first silo in Hamilton Township was erected by Samuel Philip, and it was not long before ensilage—the storing of green crops, especially chopped corn—became the accepted means of providing winter feed for stock.* In northern townships of the rugged granite country many farms have been abandoned, but sometimes farmers on better land many miles southward utilize the country for their herds of cattle in summer, and then bring them home to winter on ensilage. In these regions marsh hay is still harvested in much the same fashion as followed by the pioneers.

Among innumerable good stock-breeders in various parts of the province Mossom M. Boyd of Bobcaygeon stands apart as the creator of a new animal, which he called the *cattalo*. He first obtained hybrids by crossing buffaloes with domestic cattle, and then by mating the hybrids among themselves produced the

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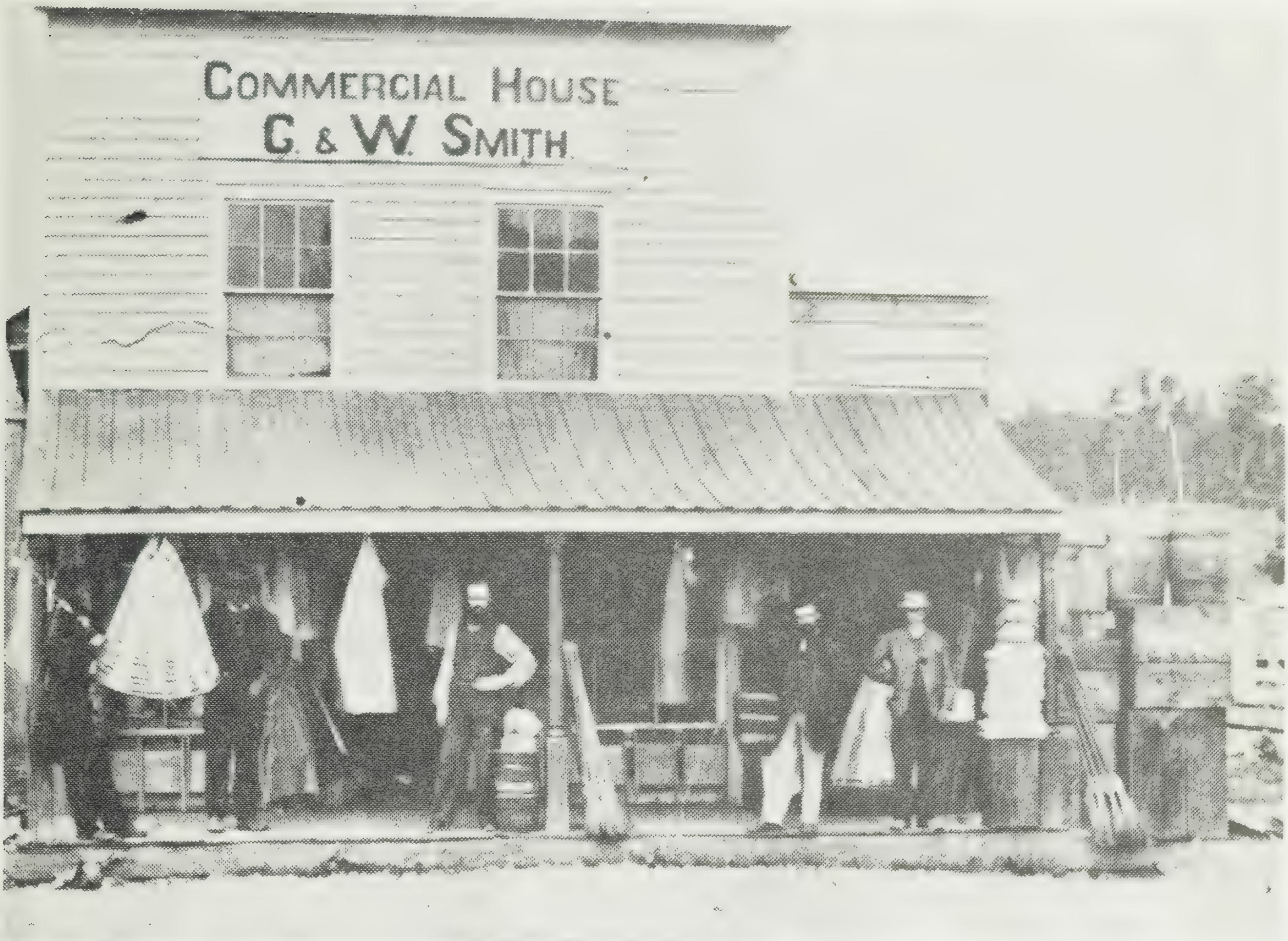
*In recent years the green and succulent grass of June has been substituted for corn in the ensilage process on many Ontario farms.



Courtesy George A. Smith

GENERAL STORE, PAISLEY, 1867

William and George Smith are prominent on the verandah.

International Nickel Ltd.

Russell Taber

THE DRAY

stable type cattalo. His aim was to secure animals that would be good for beef and at the same time have sufficient ruggedness and rustling qualities to winter in such regions as the northern parts of the prairie provinces where lack of winter feed and shelter makes ordinary cattle-raising impracticable. The new animal had a hide almost as thick as a buffalo, was not susceptible to disease, needed no shelter, and grazed through the snow of winter; nor did it drift with storms as do ordinary cattle, but held its ground. On Boyd's death in 1914 the Dominion Department of Agriculture continued the work by placing twenty head of the new animals in Saskatchewan.*

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*Boyd's career is well summarized in D. J. Wurtele, 'Mossom Boyd: Lumber King of the Trent Valley' (*Ontario History,* Vol. L, No. 4). His commercial empire, which included stock-raising, steamboats, and railroads, was firmly established by his father, Mossom Boyd, Sr. (1815-1883), who had settled on Sturgeon Lake in 1834 and became prominent in the lumber business. Both father and son were characterized by boundless energy and enterprise. See H. R. Cummings, *Early Days in Haliburton,* published in 1962 with a Foreword by the Honourable Leslie M. Frost; and Florence B. Murray, *Muskoka and Haliburton, 1615-1875* (Volume Six of the Ontario Series, University of Toronto Press, 1963).

CHAPTER V

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

EXCEPTING potatoes, which the settler was advised to plant in quantity for his own food, at least until he became established, vegetables were scarce in bush settlements. Potatoes, of which the crop was usually from 200 to 230 bushels per acre, were dug up by the spade in Canada, a method which must have resulted in considerable cutting of the crop; but the two-tine hayfork was long the only one in use. Potatoes had to be stored in cellars or pits to preserve them from winter frosts.

> In pitting them [advised 'Ex-Settler'] don't have the pits made over large—from twenty to forty bushels are the best size; and if you happen not to have straw to cover them with previous to the clay going on, cedar or hemlock boughs or the fibrous sod that is on the surface of new land answer very well. Don't trust to less than twenty inches or two feet of clay, but with this you may defy the winter 54° below freezing point.

But there are tricks to every trade, and some settlers learned them only by sad experience:

> We dug a great hole like a grave [writes John Geikie of Bidport Township], many feet deep, large enough to hold a hundred bushels of potatoes and I don't know what besides. The bottom of this excavation was then strewed with loose boards, and the sides were walled around with logs set up side by side to keep the earth from falling in. On the top, instead of a roof we laid a floor of similar logs close together, and on this we heaped up earth to the thickness of about three feet to keep out the cold, however severe it might be. The entrance was at one end, down a short ladder, which brought you to a door roughly fitted in.

To be sure that frost did not penetrate, the Geikies filled in the ladder approach with earth. In the spring when a boy was sent down to bring up potatoes he was overcome with carbonic acid gas, for in the absence of any ventilation the potatoes had 'heated' and rotted. Straw instead of earth at the ladder end might have improved the conditions of storage, but the best remedy was a hollow log or tube of wood for ventilation.

If grown at all, turnips and other root vegetables were similarly stored, and the pit shortly became the roothouse which every settler was advised to have; for Mrs. Traill, in pointing out that vegetables like 'cabbages and savoys and all sorts of roots' kept well, yet warned that 'to the vile custom of keeping green vegetables in the shallow moist cellars below the kitchens much of the sickness that attacks settlers under the various forms of agues, intermittent, remittent, and lake fevers may be traced'. In fact many settlers never took the trouble to remove the previous year's rotting vegetables before storing the new crop. Turnips were extensively grown in some districts, but just as scarce in others.

Among various methods and uses, pumpkins were sometimes steamed and fed to hogs. For human consumption they were usually peeled and cut into sections, which were then strung up to dry for winter use; and the whole process was often the occasion of a bee. Pumpkin pies, of course, became almost a staple food. A type of molasses was also made from pumpkins—characteristically called *punkin sass* by Americans; and even pumpkin soup was among the variants.

The scarcity of seeds in Upper Canada naturally led to a scarcity of vegetables. Many emigrants from Britain, having almost no idea of what was ahead of them, wasted their funds, as Robert Lamond points out, by carrying numerous 'old and worm-eaten boxes and chests, and these mostly empty, together with old wash-tubs and other articles of furniture, which might be purchased for half the cost of transportation'. Instead they might have very easily carried something useful to the New Land—seeds. Charles Grece, writing in 1819, recommended taking 'Lucern, sainfoin, onions, leek, parsley, and sage; Swedish-turnip, blue and white field turnip, drumhead cabbage, early York carrots, mangle-wurtzel, raddish, lettuce, gooseberry, and different currant seeds'.

In some soils, even in 'the Bush', vegetables grew as well as in long-cultivated farms along the front. John Geikie, in the early 'seventies, grew pumpkins in the River St. Clair region so large that one filled a wheelbarrow; and he says that carrots, which were good feed for cattle, were produced on various farms at from 1100 to 1300 bushels per acre. 'Carrot shows' were held in that locality to display them. He found, too, that

Sarah Ann Carter

FRUIT

Sarah Ann Carter

FLOWERS

These water colours, reproduced by courtesy of the artist's grand-daughter **Winifred Dalton**, were painted in the 1850's from the products of the artist's garden in Nelson Township, Halton County.

melons, cucumbers, beets, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, parsnips, radishes, onions, 'lettuces', asparagus, red peppers, celery, rhubarb, tomatoes, and 'castor-oil plant' (a type of bean) could be grown successfully with 'a most bountiful return' from little in the nature of soil preparation or care.

The mention of tomatoes recalls that not until after the middle of the century were they grown to eat, for they were thought to be poisonous; but they were pretty to look at and were sometimes called love-apples.

Along the front, and especially near centres of population, market gardeners early became prominent. In the Don Valley near Toronto in the eighteen-forties were specialists like George Leslie, nurseryman, florist, and gardener, and Joseph Pape, who established himself by working hard and long every spare moment in his Queen Street garden and eventually furnished the city with much of its supply of fine vegetables. Toronto street names in the locality where they once had their gardens commemorate these skilful horticulturists. Mrs. Edward Copleston visited a 75-acre nursery east of Toronto in 1857, possibly Leslie's or Pape's, and wrote that

> the unwearied industry and extraordinary enterprise of the proprietor was well worth notice. Experiment after experiment must have been persevered in, at a great outlay in labour and time, before any newly introduced plant or tree could be safely sent forth as acclimatized. At the period when we first saw this nursery thousands of plants had perished just as their hardy habits were about to be pronounced, after five years' test, as fairly established.

Near London, similarly, two Englishmen established in 1841 one of the earliest—if not the first—nursery in western Upper Canada, selling fruit-trees, shrubs, and flowers to the increasing number whose prosperity and taste made possible the aesthetic pleasures of gardening; but there were nurseries in the Niagara and central districts at least as early as the second decade of the century. The future capital of Canada, Bytown, had also a very industrious market gardener, for W. H. G. Kingston wrote in 1855 that Chapman's garden was quite 'one of the objects most worthy of inspection':

> Mr. Chapman is an Englishman. He had settled on his present location little more than two years before this, when it was a perfect swamp. By his individual skill and energy he has established a first-rate market-garden for the supply of Bytown, aided chiefly by his wife and sons. He works wonders, indeed, with his own hands, for he has the greatest difficulty in retaining labourers in his employ-

> ment. As soon as they have obtained a little skill and knowledge from him they quit him to set up elsewhere for themselves; else, he complains, when they get a little money, off they go to amuse themselves and do not return till it is spent.
>
> He sends two large market-carts into Bytown every morning, laden with fruit, vegetables, and flowers. He has planted vines which he thinks will succeed, and has formed mushroom-beds which answer well—though he scarcely yet considers himself fairly started. He drives also an extensive pickle business and supplies all parts of Canada, the only assistants on whom he can rely in preparing his pickles being his wife and little ones. He had forty hogsheads ready for shipment. He with just pride exhibited his rooms full of casks of vinegar, barrels of cucumbers, onions, peaches, beans, &c.; then there were crowds of jars and bottles, which he can afford to sell far cheaper than the cost of foreign pickles.

Peas and beans were widely grown on long-cleared farms. Peas, Mrs. Traill wrote, were 'always fine, especially the marrowfats, which are sometimes grown in the fields on cleared lands that are under the plough'. Numerous varieties of beans were grown, but all 'of the French or kidney kind'. The 'very prolific white runner' beans were planted in a small hillock hoed up and then hollowed a little in the centre, wherein were dropped

> four or five seeds round the edges; as soon as the bean puts forth its runners insert a pole of five or six feet in the centre of the hill; the plants will all meet and twine up it, bearing a profusion of pods, which are cut and boiled as the scarlet-runners, or else, in their dry or ripe state, stewed and eaten with salt meat; this, I believe, is the more usual way of cooking them. The early bushbean is a dwarf with bright yellow seed.

In general, however, early settlers had neither the time nor the inclination to develop gardens, and vegetables were frequently scarce and expensive.* No walls were built around gardens in Canada, except insofar as a high fence might be called one. Stone was occasionally used for the purpose, but a paling or rail fence served at least to keep the cattle out, though providing no protection from wind and weather, which is the object of garden walls in Britain.

As Robert Stevenson passed through the country in the early eighteen-forties he observed numerous hotbeds on long-established farms, partly, no doubt, because glass was cheap—100

*Preserving and canning were attempted in the home as soon as crops and general progress permitted. The first canning factory in Canada is said to have been in Demorestville, Prince Edward County. Called by the French Presqu' Isle de Quinté, it has always been 'a farmers' county'.

square feet for 5s. Melons, he noticed, grew well and ripened without glass. Even farther north, in the Perth district, the Reverend William Bell observed that melons and cucumbers came 'to as great perfection as in any other part of the world'; and he found that musk melons weighed from 6 to 10 pounds and water melons from 12 to 20. 'They are very refreshing during the great heats in summer', he adds, 'and ought to be attended to by all new settlers.' Catharine Traill described how she planted them:

> The cultivation of the melon is very simple; you first draw the surrounding earth together with a broad hoe into a heap; the middle of this heap is then slightly hollowed out so as to form a basin, the mould being raised round the edges; into this hollow you insert several melon-seeds and leave the rest to the summer heat; if you water the plants from time to time it is well for them; the soil should be fine black mould; and if your hills are inclining to a hollow part of your ground, so as to retain the moisture, so much the finer will be your fruit.

She adds that experience in Canadian gardening indicated that it was best not to raise the level of a garden above that of land around, for the sun's power tended to dry out such plots, withering the plants; and that vegetables were generally planted relatively late but matured quickly.

Many settlers, to keep green the memory of the Old Land, brought British plants or seeds and produced gooseberries, currants, raspberries, and strawberries; but in general the fruit was not of the quality to which they had been accustomed. Wild grapes—even wild asparagus—were extensively used, from the days of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, wife of the first lieutenant-governor, to recent times.

> When a farmer from the old country comes out, [says Mrs. Traill] he looks aghast at the wild rugged appearance of our fields covered with stumps from three to four feet high, and the surface of the ground interlaced with roots. Around these stumps a number of wild shrubs appear in the course of a year or two—wild raspberries and gooseberries and a number of other fruits, as well as a luxuriant growth of strawberries—but it is some years before the fields begin to look smooth.

Strawberries were not largely cultivated prior to the eighteen-sixties. John Cross, a native of Scarborough, England, became at Oakville, Canada West, a millwright, then one of the chief proponents of strawberry culture in the province. In 1869 the *Canadian Champion* said he had got the idea from New York

State, and his success speedily encouraged dozens of others settled near Oakville and elsewhere to grow strawberries for market.

> Nearly two hundred acres [said the *Canadian Champion*] are devoted to strawberries, which have this season yielded enormously, and owing to Oakville being situated on the railway and having an excellent harbour, fruit is carried off both by land and water in enormous quantities. To show the importance of this interest we may mention that on Tues. last 400 bushels or 12,800 quarts were shipped for the Toronto and Montreal markets! This, at 10 cents a quart, would make nearly $1200 for one day's shipment. . . . On visiting the fields we found nearly the whole juvenile population busily engaged in gathering the crimson fruit.*

Canadian Illustrated News W. Cruickshank

STRAWBERRY PICKING NEAR OAKVILLE, 1876

Honey falls naturally into a chapter dealing with fruits. Long before any effort was made to raise and domesticate bees—if the term may be used—stores of honey were obtained from the forest. The Abbott diary gives a most interesting account of the method of tracing the location of a hive:

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*See Hazel C. Mathews' *Oakville and the Sixteen* (1953), an excellent local history.

> *June 14th.*—Found a swarm of bees in a hollow tree in the woods, which was claimed by a bee-hunter, who, however, renounced his right to my superior title, he only having marked the tree while I was the owner of it. Much as the habits of this wonderful and useful little insect have been studied, and that with the most successful results, there is one—and I have never seen it mentioned in any dissertation on the subject—upon which the bee-hunter implicitly depends for his successful search after its honeyed treasures, and he is seldom disappointed.
>
> Whenever he finds a bee he catches it, and puts it into a little box with a glass cover to it and keeps it there for a day or two, when he gives it as much honey as it chooses to take, and then opens the box and allows it to fly away. But he marks the road it takes and follows it,* but days or weeks or even months may elapse before he does so, when he is almost sure to find its home with a rich treasure there, sometimes of even a hundred weight of honey; but instances have been known when he has had to travel more than six miles before he reached the spot. From which it is evident that the bee, when starved for a day or two and then filled with honey and permitted to escape, literally in the most exact sense of the word goes *straight* home.
>
> Sometimes, and that not unfrequently, he finds that it takes its flight to a settled part of the country, but almost every settlement is bounded on one side or another by the wild interminable wilderness of woods, and in that direction alone does he follow it. Cutting down the tree, cross-cutting it above and below the swarm with a saw, getting it home after being all of us well stung, setting it up as a hive with a board at each end, and fomenting our swollen hands and faces occupied the greatest part of the day, and as it turned out it was far from unprofitably employed, as I have now a valuable stock from it.**

Orchards were at first most common in the western part of the province, in the Niagara district, and along Lake Erie, no doubt because the climate was milder; but, excepting peaches and grapes, which became increasingly prominent after 1850, the fruits could be as well grown in Northumberland County and elsewhere.† Pears were seldom found, but apples and cherries were common, though not highly valued. Pigs were often allowed to root around the orchard, soon becoming so satiated, observed John Howison near Niagara, that they would eat only the best peaches. Little or no effort was made to trim the trees, protect them from insects and worms, or otherwise care for them; and it was usual to grow grain among the fruit trees. Thomas Fowler's comments upon fruits and vegetables, published in 1832, were probably true until well after the middle of the century:

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*The bee stops frequently, and a sharp-eyed pursuer is sometimes able to follow as far as the nest.

**A pleasantly written and well illustrated account of modern bee-keeping has recently been published by the well-known Don Valley naturalist Charles Sauriol. It is entitled *Honey Is My Hobby*. Mr. Sauriol learned about bees from the late J. Rice Murphy, 'hermit apiarist of the Don Valley'.

†Dr. William Dunlop stated in 1832 that the Rhenish vine was introduced by German settlers in the autumn of 1830, but that it was too early to tell how the grape and wine industries would succeed.

> When a farmer gets into harness here he must have an orchard and garden. Some plant their fruit trees in the fields, where the land is in crop and pasture in rotation; but others have their orchard in an enclosed corner of a field, and occasionally put sheep into the plot to eat the grass, as they are less destructive among the fruit trees than cattle. But wheresoever the orchard is, no attention is paid to it after it is planted except what may be necessary to gather the fruit; and yet they have abundance of excellent apples, pears, plums, and cherries. The gardens produce currants, but no other kinds are common in a garden here. Rasps and strawberries grow in the woods, but the people would not be at the trouble to plant them in their gardens, as they are well pleased with what the forest produces. In my opinion the wild rasps and strawberries are flavoured much of a harsh juniper taste. The currants reared in gardens are very fine flavoured and both rich and large.

There were settlers who took the trouble to have good orchards.

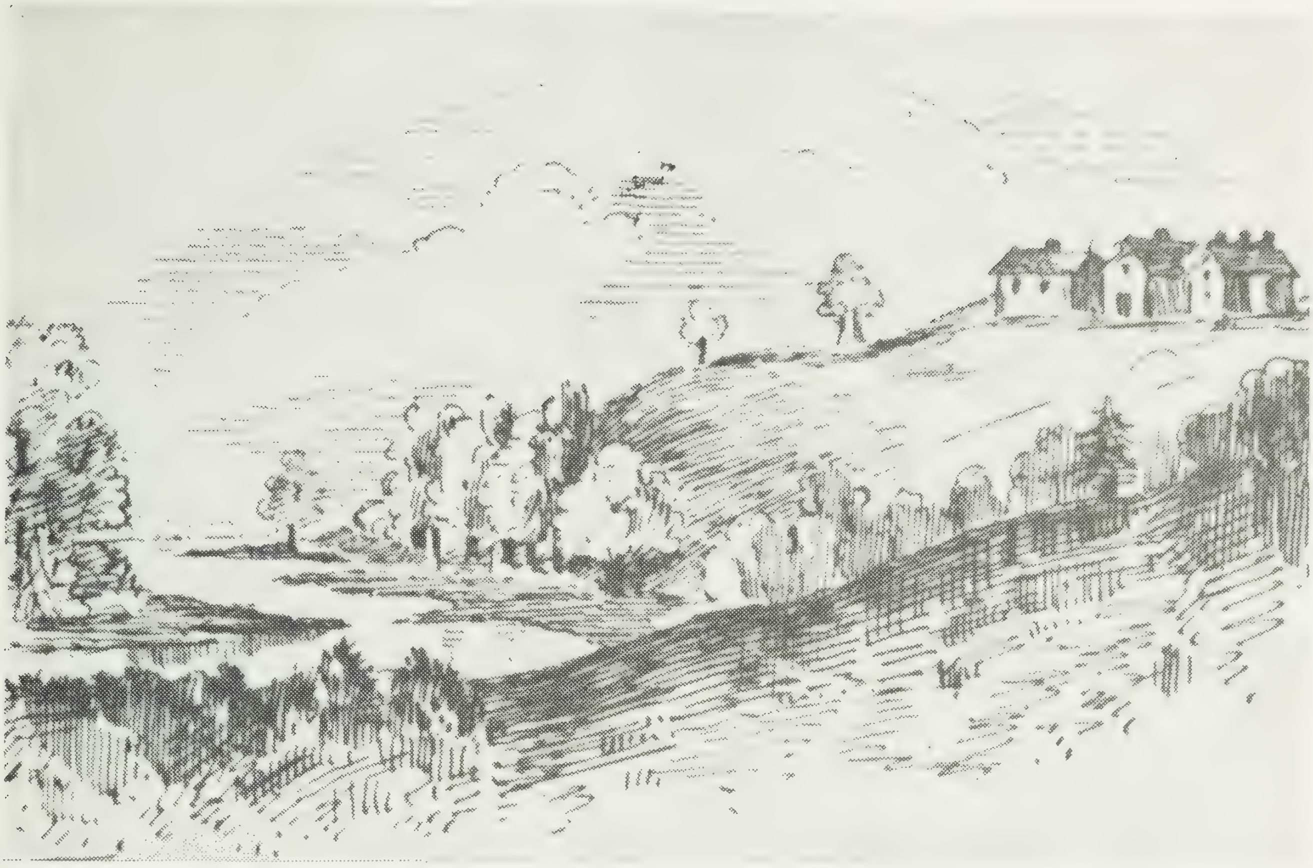
> I should advise the emigrant who becomes an agriculturist [wrote Samuel Strickland] to pay great attention to orchard planting, and indeed to devote a portion of his first-cleared fallow for that purpose. The trees should be planted in rows four square rods apart, so that, look at them whichever way you please, they will present a straight row. By this method you will be able to work the land well with the plough, which is essential to the well doing of your orchard. The young trees should be washed with hot lime-wash or scrubbed with strong wood-ash lye or soft-soap every two or three years, which will prevent canker and keep the bark bright and clean. Instead of clay for grafting it is better to use a composition made of bee's-wax, rosin, and grease put on hot with a brush.

Strickland himself, whose farm was near Lakefield, had sowed a garden bed with apple-pips in 1833, grafted the results with 'the choicest fruit I could obtain', and set them out the following year. A few years later he had two orchards which produced a hundred bushels a year of plums, greengages, and apples of which he names Ribstone pippin, Newtown pippin, Pearmain, Pomme-de-gris, and Pomme-de-neige. No orchard, he said, should be left without a fence around it as protection against sheep and cattle.

In very early times ginseng was found growing in the swamps of Upper Canada, and some enterprising settlers harvested it and sold it in York. In 1801 Jacob Herchmer was paying 2s. per pound for it dried, or 1s. if green, for it was in steady demand in China—it was said it would bring its weight in silver—as an 'all-heal' remedy. Ginseng, which needs long-continuing care and labour, has for many years been a special crop in Norfolk and Brant counties, where its growers sell it under contract to Chinese merchants in Hong Kong and New York for use in drinks, soup, and other foods.

There was probably no finer farm in Upper Canada in 1826 than Colonel Talbot's. Joseph Pickering, his overseer, says he had asparagus among many other refinements that most of the pioneers had not even heard of. Pickering was from Fenny Stratford, in Buckinghamshire, and was not only a 'plain, practical English farmer', as a notice of his book says, but highly intelligent as well. After referring to the crops of wheat, oats, peas, potatoes, and corn, he lists the Talbot stock as 150 sheep (shut up at night to protect them from wolves), 25 milch cows, 4 yoke of oxen broken in besides one yoke killed recently, 50 or 60 head of young cattle, 23 calves, 4 horses 'of the nag kind', 4 sows, and a number of pigs. Forty-two hogs were fattened during the season, filling 35 barrels with 7000 lbs. of pork.

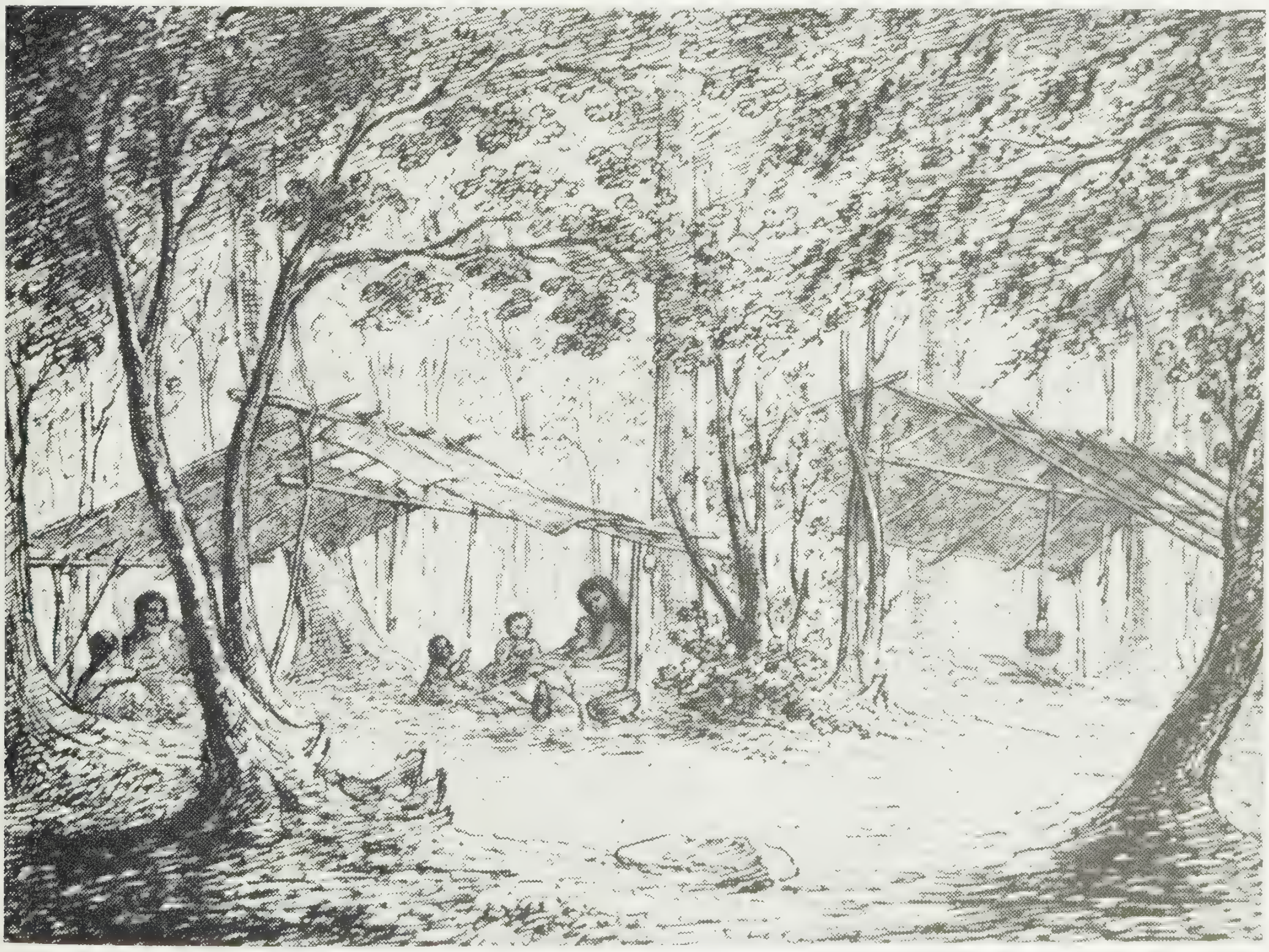
> Colonel Talbot [continued his overseer] has a garden pretty well stocked with shrubs, fruit-trees, &c., in better order than most in America, yet not like a good common one in England. There are cherries, plums, apricots, peaches, nectarines, gooseberries, currants, &c., also water or musk melons, and cucumbers fine and plenty; cabbages and other vegetables thrive very well; a patch of Swedish turnips (or ruta-baga) of a good size, notwithstanding the dry season. A few hills of hops at one corner of the garden look remarkably well; they are gathered at the beginning of September. There is also a few bunches of English cowslips, but none wild in the woods. There is a species of the violet in the fields, with less fragrance than the English ones.
>
> The Colonel has likewise extensive orchards; some of the fruit fine, yet the great proportion raised from apple-kernels and remain ungrafted; although they bear well their fruit is small and inferior to those grafted, except for cider. A great portion were suffered to hang too long on the trees, until the frosts came and spoiled them. The beautiful little humming birds are numerous this season. . . . A large flock of wild turkeys were seen near the woods, and came to the farm-yard where the men shot several of them; one weighed 15 lbs. after being picked. There are plenty in the woods of the same breed as the tame black turkey and excellent eating. Cut the 'corn'



John Ross Robertson Collection

COLONEL TALBOT'S HOME, PORT TALBOT

This is a copy by Mrs. Simcoe of a sketch sent to England in 1806.



Courtesy Langton family

Anne Langton

INDIAN CAMP NEAR THE LANGTON HOME, STURGEON LAKE, IN THE 1830's

> about the 20th of September, which was much eaten by the raccoons and black squirrels which are extraordinarily numerous, troublesome, and destructive from the scarcity of nuts and mast this season.

Mrs. Anna Jameson, who visited the Colonel ten years later, gives more details of his orchard and garden:

> He has sixteen acres of orchard-ground, in which he has planted and reared with success all the common European fruits, as apples, pears, plums, cherries, in abundance; but what delighted me beyond everything else was a garden of more than two acres, very neatly laid out and enclosed, and in which he evidently took exceeding pride and pleasure—it was the first thing he showed me after my arrival. It abounds in roses of different kinds, the cuttings of which he had brought himself from England in the few visits he had made there. Of these he gathered the most beautiful buds and presented them to me. . . . We then sat down on a pretty seat under a tree where he told me he often came to meditate. He described the appearance of the spot when he first came here as contrasted with its present appearance.*

Mrs. Jameson also saw settlers at the other end of the social scale, newly transplanted to 'the Bush'. One clearing, she says, was

> an opening of felled trees of about an acre or two; the commencement of a log-house; a patch of ground surrounded by a snake-fence, enclosing the first crop of wheat and perhaps a little Indian corn; great heaps of timber-trees and brushwood laid together and burning; a couple of oxen dragging along another enormous trunk to add to the pile.

Another, 'more desolate than the rest', aroused feelings of sympathy for the wife and mother almost buried in the backwoods, for it would be years before she could even think of having an orchard or garden:

> There was an unfinished log-house, only one half roofed in and habitable, and this presented some attempt at taste, having a small rustic porch or portico and the windows on either side framed. No ground was fenced in, and the newly-felled timber lay piled in heaps ready to burn; around lay the forest, its shadows darkening, deepening as the day declined. But what rivetted my attention was the light figure of a female, arrayed in a silk gown and a handsome shawl, who was pacing up and down in front of the house with a slow step and pensive air. She had an infant lying on her arm, and in the other hand she waved a green bough to keep off the mosquitos.

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*This is a pleasing picture of 'The Father of the Talbot Settlement', as he sometimes signed himself. In later years the management of his farm deteriorated, as did Talbot himself and his relations with his settlers.

CHAPTER VI

LATER PIONEERS

FROM the eighteen-forties to the 'eighties, and later, the more northerly regions of Old Ontario were in process of settlement, and their first settlers were as much pioneers as those who occupied 'the front' almost a century earlier. 'The Queen's Bush' (north of the 'Huron Tract'), Haliburton, Muskoka, and Parry Sound are prominent among these.* There were, of course, some differences, notably in communications with the front, but in general life was just as crude and primitive as that experienced earlier by hundreds of thousands.

The first settler in Stanhope Township, County of Haliburton, was Isaac Hunter, who squatted on a tongue of land between Big and Little Boskung lakes in 1855. The Mississaga Indians had earlier made a small clearing there, and he grew a scant crop of grain and vegetables until 1859, when he sold out to George Mason and pushed further into the wilderness near Dorset, accompanied by his wife and daughter. It is recorded that when he failed to come out for supplies after a heavy January blizzard Zack Cole went in on snowshoes and found him dead of starvation in the shack and being eaten by swarms of mice, which his half-crazed wife and daughter were killing and eating.

In the late 'thirties and early 'forties colonisation roads like Hurontario Street and the Garafraxa (Rankin's), the Sydenham, the Durham, and the Northern were pushed on towards Owen Sound, Collingwood, and Meaford, opening for settlement some 2,000,000 acres of 'The Queen's Bush'. The experiences of the first settlers in this part of the province were much like those of earlier immigrants along the front. 'The shanty to which we went', recalled Mrs. Cook who settled in Bruce County in the 'fifties, 'had a bark roof, and this roof leaked so

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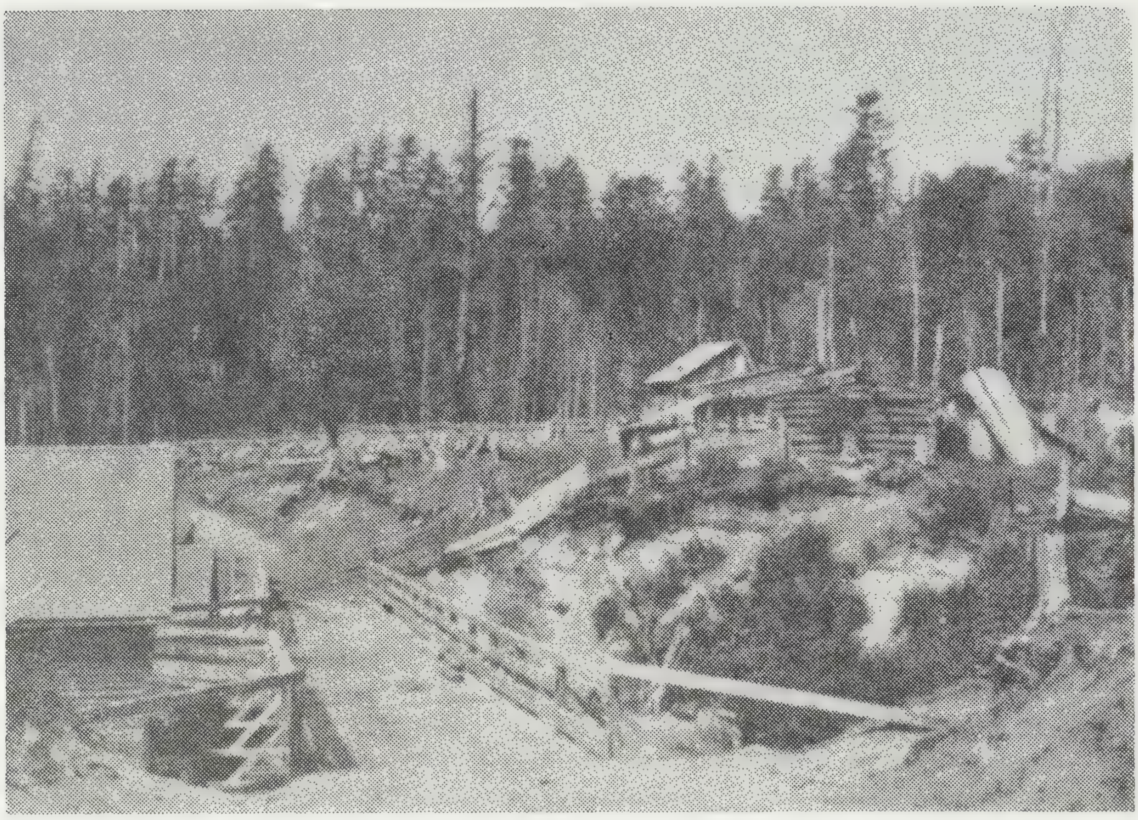
*And still later, resulting largely from the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, parts of Algoma and sections of Northern and Northwestern Ontario suitable for agriculture.



HALIBURTON VILLAGE, 1864

At the left is the post office. The first white child was born in the log house at the right.

badly that when it rained my husband had to hold an umbrella over us when we were in bed'; and its floors were made of such lumber as drifted ashore from passing vessels. In Beaver Valley near Meaford some early settlers raised houses of two stories, but each had but one room and the upper was reached by a ladder.

The crudeness of earlier periods is similarly evident in stories of the grinding of grain in the counties of Grey, Dufferin, Bruce, and Wellington. Robert Brock, at Belfountain near Georgian Bay, said that the use of a hand-mill was so laborious that men would rather 'chop all day in the bush than grind a half bushel of wheat in the old coffee-mill'. When the first grist-mills were opened settlers from many miles around brought their grists in *jumpers* (home-made sleighs) hauled by oxen, and these vehicles had sometimes to be used in summer as well as winter, the trails being impassable for wheels; while in many instances it was easier for men to transport the grain on their backs.

At least as early as the eighteen-forties began a practice in pioneering that speedily led to abuse and shortly became a 'racket'. This was the acceptance by settlers of 'farm-pupils' or 'remittance men' from England, usually at a charge up to £100

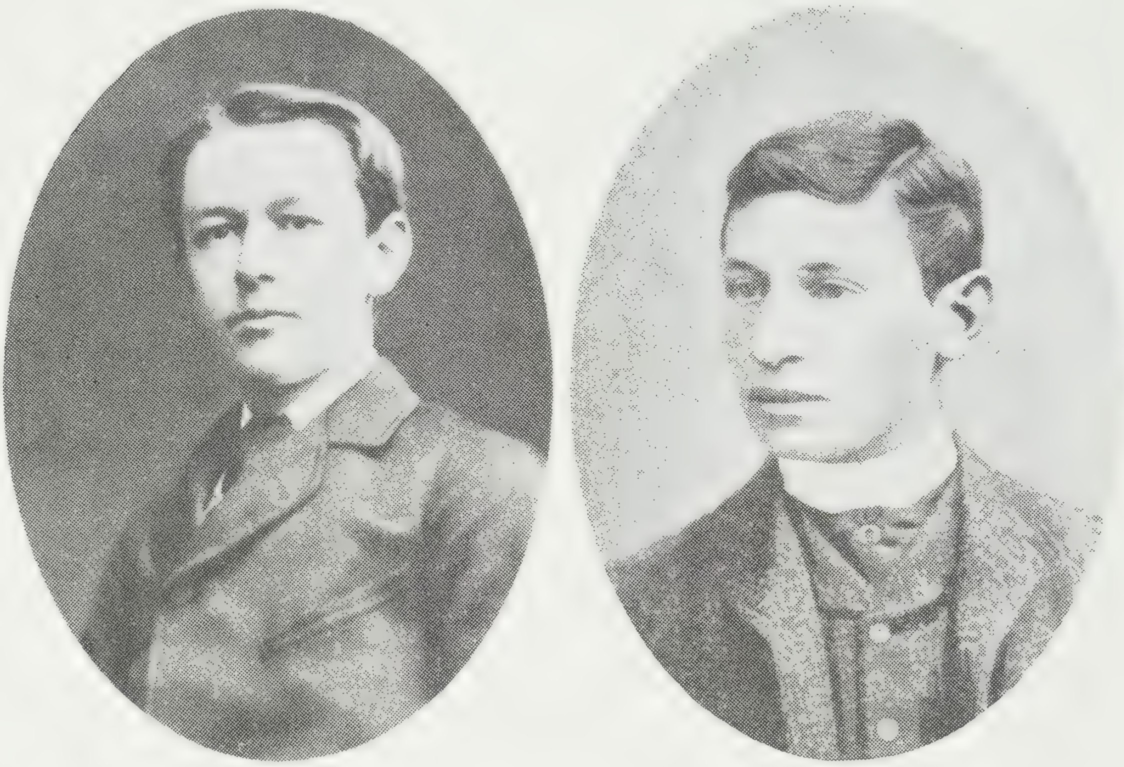
Eliot Warburton, *Hochelaga* (1846)

FARMER'S JUMPER AND GENTLEMAN'S CARRIOLE

per year for three years' training in Canadian farming. Englishmen particularly seized it as an easy method of eking out a living; and it was a means frequently accepted with alacrity in England by guardians of 'younger sons' and others whose acceptance into the army, navy, public office, and the Church of England was no longer the assured prerogative of wealth, influence, and social position.

Samuel Strickland, prominent pioneer in both the Peterborough district and the 'Huron Tract', affords an excellent example of Canadian 'host'. The *Cobourg Star* of April 25, 1855, states that Major Strickland was at that time bringing from England 'young gentlemen of good means whom he instructs in the mysteries of Canadian farming, and who, as soon as they are capable of taking charge for themselves, purchase land and become valuable settlers'. Few, however, became farmers, but tended rather to emerge into some aspect of town life, where many contributed not a little to general culture. While the teaching in this case, as in others, may have tended to be secondary to the receipt of the payment, Strickland was considered by some of his contemporaries to be doing valuable work; but a biographical notice of one of the pupils of his Agricultural School, Mutius Clementi, said the instruction 'consisted chiefly in a thorough training in manly sports and a fine discrimination in the selection of liquors'. In any event the pupils enlivened the Lakefield district by circulating a manuscript newspaper in which they took many a sly dig at the pomposity of 'the gallant Major', who was a member of the militia.

One of Canada's most notorious murderers, Reginald Birchall—an Englishman who had come to Woodstock—was convicted in 1890 of the murder of Fred Benwell whom he had enticed to this country to learn farming, and had shot upon arrival. Other 'farm-pupils' would shortly have been murdered if, by the merest chance, the fate of Birchall's first victim had not been discovered.*



Fred DelaFosse

Fred Benwell

TWO ONTARIO REMITTANCE MEN

DelaFosse became Chief Librarian of Peterborough; Benwell was murdered at Woodstock by Reginald Birchall in 1890.

In 1878 Fred M. DelaFosse emigrated to Canada as a farm-pupil of a retired army officer settled in Muskoka, who received

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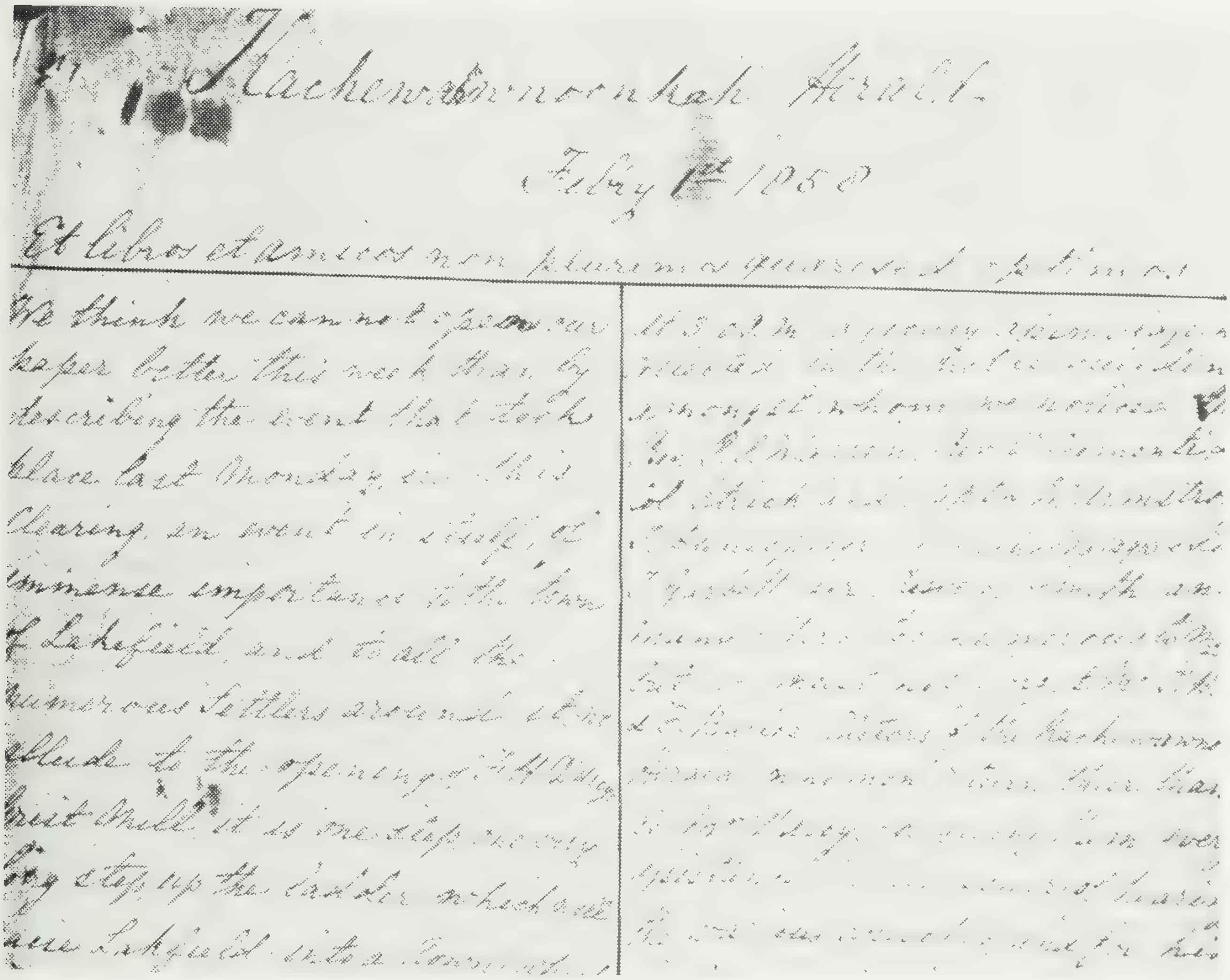
*A detailed account of this famous case forms Volume Three of the author's *Famous Canadian Trials.* The first volume is in print, the other forty-nine in typescript in the Library of Parliament, Ottawa, the Congressional Library, Washington, the Montreal Public Library, the Toronto Public Library, and the University of Toronto Library.

Courtesy George M. Douglas

SAMUEL STRICKLAND PRESENTING DIPLOMAS, LAKEFIELD

Cartoon from the MS. newspaper issued by his farm pupils shows 'the gallant Major' rewarding the remittance-men.



[illegible] Herald.

Feby 1st 1858

Et libros et amicos non plurimos quaeras sed optimos

We think we cannot open our paper better this week than by describing the event that took place last Monday in this clearing, an event in itself of immense importance to the town of Lakefield and to all the numerous settlers around. We allude to the opening of the [illegible] Grist Mill it is one step, a very big step up the ladder which will raise Lakefield into a town [illegible]

[illegible]

Courtesy George M. Douglas

MANUSCRIPT NEWSPAPER OF STRICKLAND'S FARM PUPILS, LAKEFIELD from the pupil's uncle in England a premium of £100 per annum for three years' training and instruction in Canadian backwoods life. The information that came to England described in glowing terms the natural beauties and blissful health that awaited young men in 'the Bush'.

Gullible and somewhat dandified in costume—in general opinion a *dude* or *swell*—DelaFosse was 'taken for a sucker', as he put it in his book *English Bloods* which was published in 1930 as a description of his experiences; and from his account we are able to estimate just how closely the farm-pupil business approximated the comment of a contemporary settler: 'Of all the goldarned swindles I ever heard of, this takes the cake!'*

The clearing of Captain Martin, where DelaFosse was to serve his apprenticeship, was about three acres in extent, and well strewn with blackened logs and stumps interspersed with large boulders. There was as yet no arable land, and two log shacks plastered with mud and manure formed the residence. Axes, spades, and scythes were scattered about, and on a small verandah was a tin basin with a dirty communal towel. Captain Martin and his wife, a workman named Melius, and three farm-pupils made up the household. Of the young Englishmen one was a Cambridge graduate and the other two Public School men; in Britain this meant something, but nothing at all in Muskoka—unless highly derogatory.

The interior furnishings were typical—a floor of rough basswood slabs, a table and three chairs, and an assortment of crockery, jam, pickles, etc., on crude shelves. A partition at one corner formed a bedroom for the proprietor and his wife, and a small cubicle similarly accommodated one of the pupils. The other three men were placed in the other shanty, and the farm-pupils as a whole were known in the district as 'the English bloods'—except where some profane nickname was considered much more appropriate and expressive.

The Stisted Road was the main highway of the region, but mere paths and blazed trails connected most settlements. Many of the settlers lived primitively on the very edge of civilization, and their morals, language, and general conduct degenerated coincident with their precarious grasp on their memories of better times. Oxen were often treated savagely—'Give them a

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*If the reader makes the fourth word profane, and pronounces *heard* in approved backwoods fashion to rhyme with *beard*, he will have the original of this remark.

damned big biff or two with that gad and tell them to get to hell out of that' is a mild example of the accepted method as described by DelaFosse; and where women engaged in logging and other farm work they usually swore, chewed tobacco, and smoked pipes with the same facility as the men. A few men attempted to read a bit in spare time, but to sit gazing into space or whittling a stick for an hour or half a day were much more characteristic Sunday diversions.

Flannel shirts, heavy mackinaw trousers tucked into long boots, perhaps a gay sash, and 'cow-feed' straw hats formed the usual clothing, and for women it was sometimes not much different:

Canadian Illustrated News James Weston

LOGGING BEE, MUSKOKA

> The upper part of her clothing [says DelaFosse about one woman] consisted of a torn blouse exhibiting more of her bust than was generally considered essential in society in those days; and the lower half was encased in a ragged pair of trousers. Her dishevelled hair hung partly down her back and partly over her face.

The proprietor of another log cabin, which the human inhabitants shared with farm animals, is described as 'an undersized anaemic-looking creature with an unkempt beard and drooping moustache'. He was wearing 'a tattered shirt, and his legs, instead of being encased in orthodox breeches, were covered with flour bags roughly sewn together'; and his feet were bare. The wife was a handsome woman, a fact apparent 'even in all her rags and wretchedness'. She wore 'a blouse, and in place of a skirt was sporting part of a man's overalls'. Her hair, of which she had a great supply, 'was tied with a dirty piece of string'. Though these settlers were living in such conditions they had been reared in vastly different surroundings; for the husband had once been a nobleman's valet and his wife a servant in the same castle.

The cabin itself was in a similar state. The door consisted of three boards and swung on pieces of leather; the one window was covered with the remains of an old dress; the bed had 'an extremely dirty coverlet and a pillow black with grime'; the dishes comprised a few pieces of cracked pottery; and 'the further end of the cabin was apparently used as a manger for a cow, as there were all the accessories in the shape of a feeding-place, a hitching post, and straw on the floor'. There were, in addition, a pig and a dog under the bed, while hens walked in and out from time to time.

Descriptions in *Letters from Muskoka* (1878) by 'An Emigrant Lady' might be quoted to bear out *English Bloods*. This family, apparently upper-class English but driven from residence in France during the Franco-Prussian War, found 'irritation and disgust which I cannot describe' their chief reaction to the crudity of everything, though they made the best of it.

> We were only too glad to sleep on the floor [she writes], to sit on upturned boxes, and to make our table of the top of a large chest. . . . As soon as time could be found your eldest brother made a bedstead for his sister's confinement, and stools and benches which we found most useful.

In similar emergencies many had not even these rude furnishings. DelaFosse tells of one woman who gave birth to a child in

> a wretched ramshackle dwelling hidden in the woods. Poverty in its most hideous form had settled on them, and there was not a bite to eat in the house. There was hardly any furniture in the place, and the aperture that had been cut in the log walls for a window-sash was simply covered with an old cloth. There was a heavy blizzard raging and the covering had been loosened from the nails, leaving half the opening bare for a clear sweep of the gale into the room. The snow came in heavy gusts and was piled on the floor in little heaps. Under these desperate conditions the little child was ushered into the world by the friendly hands of a settler's wife living close by.*

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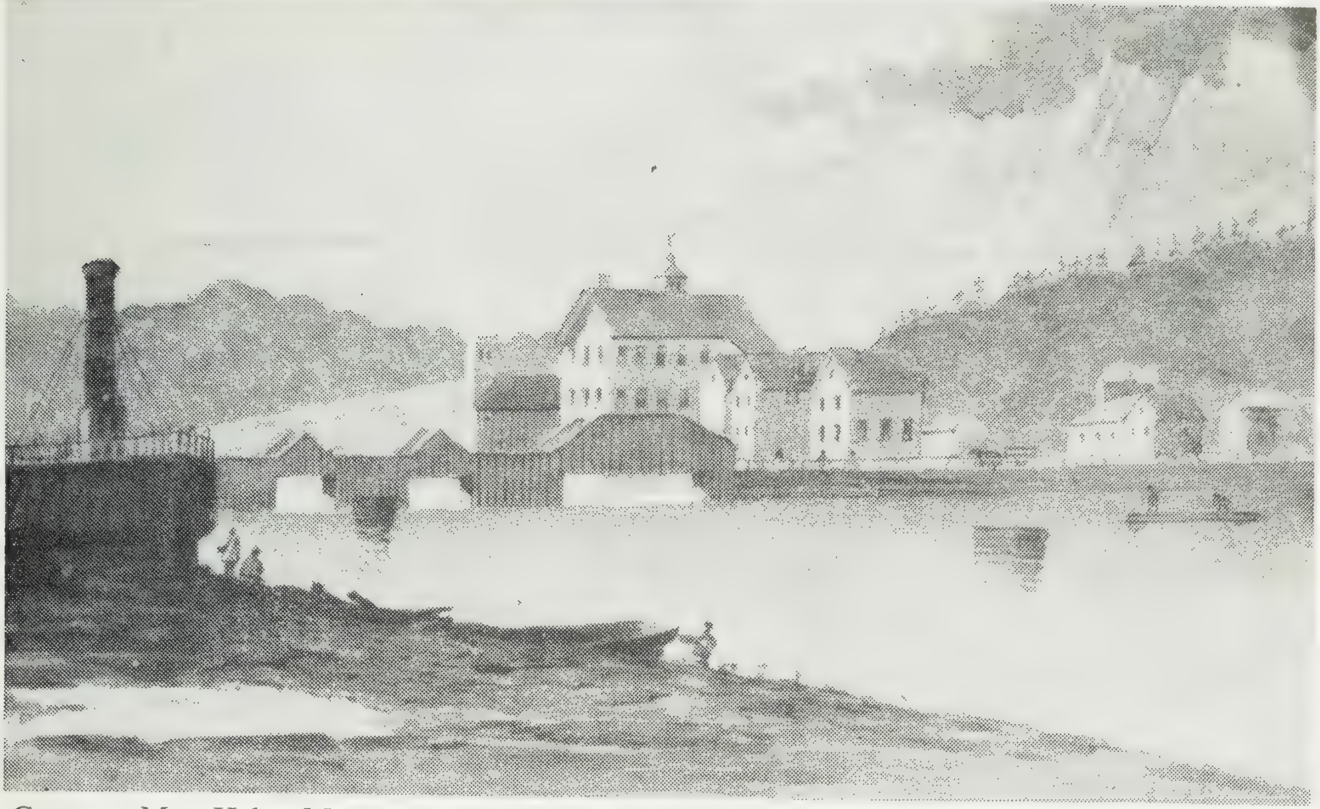
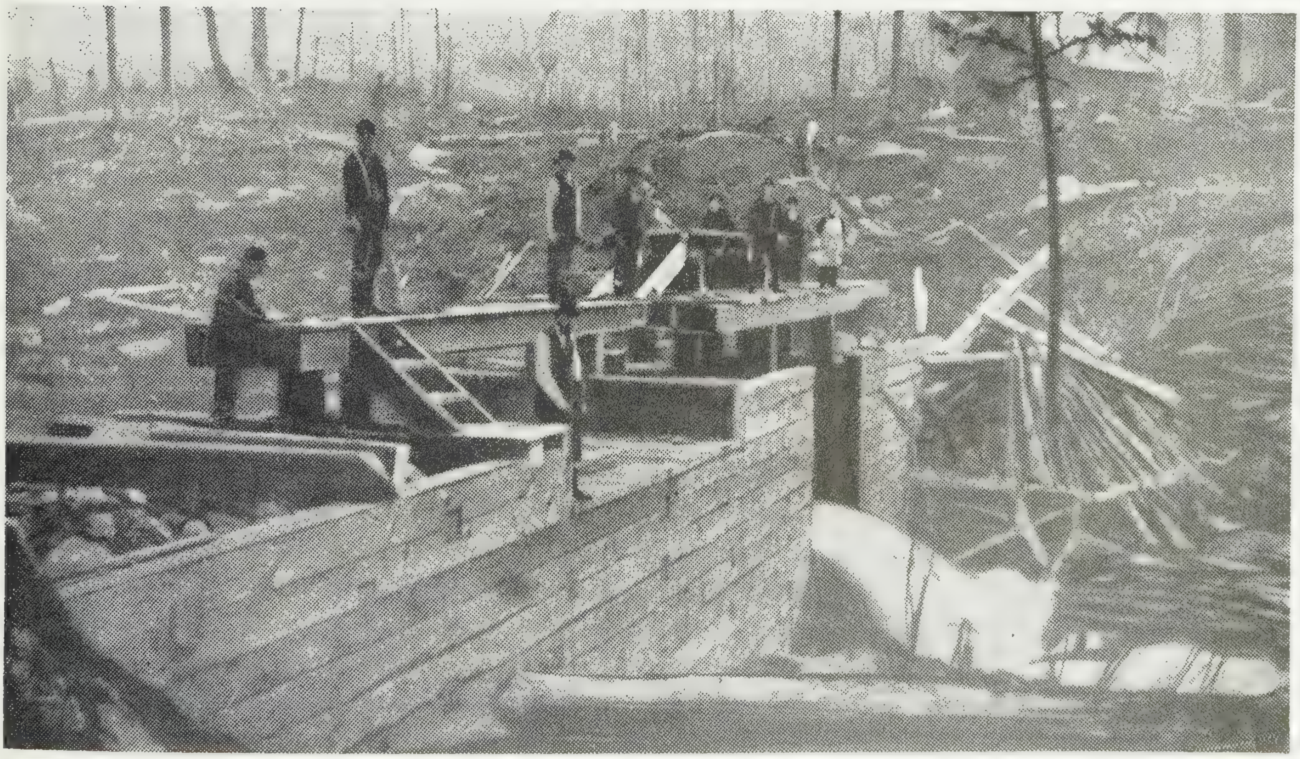
*The two books here quoted are, of course, the accounts of people who had been used to genteel living conditions; the impressions of others less favoured and less vocal must yet have been enough to include them among the great mass whom Henry David Thoreau described as living lives of 'quiet desperation'.



Courtesy Mrs. Helen Marryat, great-granddaughter of Henry Fowlds Rev. M. A. Farrar

COTTON MILL, HASTINGS, 1863

Henry Fowlds (1790-1872), long a successful lumberman and public-spirited citizen, was founder of Crooks' Rapids (Hastings) and gave it its name in 1852 in commemoration of Lady Flora Hastings of whom he had been a boyhood admirer.



Courtesy Mrs. Mary Campbell, Lindsay

DAM AT LINDSAY IN THE 1860's

The first name of the settlement was Purdy's Mills.

But it is pleasing to know that supplies were sent by neighbours, that both mother and child lived, and that the family eventually prospered. Yet there were, as often earlier, others who so degenerated that they became a social problem:

> In our immediate neighbourhood [writes DelaFosse] there lived a family who, under different conditions, would in all likelihood have been law-abiding and respectable members of society. But poverty had rendered them careless and even desperate. There were six of them, father and mother, two sons, and two daughters. The filth of the interior of their domicile was indescribable. One or two of them, through drinking snow water, had contracted goitre and were not very presentable-looking beings. The girls, grown to womanhood, were in a partially demented condition. They had lived such lives of horror that they fled at the approach of a human being and would hide themselves in corners of the fence or flee into the woods or cower in the pig-sty. Theirs was not an isolated case. There were others living not far distant who were in just as abject and deplorable a condition.

Some thirty-five years ago a criminal trial was held in Lindsay of a man from one of the later-settled townships, where, from the point of view of both living conditions and farming, some people were still living on the fringe of civilization. The charge was that this middle-aged illiterate bush-farmer had committed both incest and murder, the body of a new-born infant having been found amid garbage at his farm. It was proven in court that it had been his own daughter's child, and that he was the father of it. While much of the degeneracy resulting from isolation and hardship does not come to public notice, it is nonetheless present in many districts not actually remote except from the decencies of life. The inhabitants of regions unfit for successful farming have been at times removed at government expense to more suitable localities, and by improved roads and other civilizing influences those who remained have been able to develop the potentialities and to effect a great improvement in living conditions.*

It is apparent that in almost no respect was pioneering in Muskoka and other outlying regions in the 'seventies and 'eighties basically different from conditions earlier. Hollowed basswood slabs for roofing were still used, though an occasional settler, skilful with axe, mallet, and draw-knife, 'sliced' his own shingles from blocks of cedar or pine. Agricultural machinery, common enough along 'the front', was not found in Muskoka.

*Much of this improvement is due to the Honourable Leslie Frost, member for Victoria-Haliburton since 1937 and Prime Minister of Ontario, 1947-1961.

Candles were generally replaced by coal-oil lamps, though many saw little reason to have much other artificial light than that supplied by the fireplace. Crops and stock varied not at all, harrowing and ploughing were just as primitive, and the cradle and the flail were still used in harvesting.

What the farm-pupil was taught was nothing higher than the rough work that everyone did. He logged and burned, built log structures, carried heavy loads across portages, cleaned stables, fed swill to pigs, cradled grain, hunted cattle which had strayed into the woods, milked cows, slaughtered calves, and did anything else that the occasion required. DelaFosse says he learned something about 'hardened cud' and one or two other diseases of cattle, as well as the somewhat crude remedies and treatments in vogue at the time.

Another farm-pupil on a near-by 'dairy farm' found that he had swallowed the glittering bait of advertising, for the dairy was 'a root-house one end of which was filled with a miscellaneous supply of potatoes, and the other half by one or two shelves for standing the pans of milk on'. Finding that this equipment, with one cow grazing on five acres, was the basis of his training in the dairy industry of Canada at £100 a year, he took passage back to England after a month's experience.

An arrangement had been made that these pupils—at least ten other settlers besides Martin had them in that vicinity—were to be placed on free grants of land at the end of their apprenticeship. A near-by settler was paid $16 an acre for clearing two acres on each such lot, so it may be assumed that the land was none too well cleared, fenced, and ready for tillage; nor, after their arduous apprenticeship, is it likely that any of them felt inclined to stay longer in the rocky Muskoka bushland.

Among the unfortunate aspects of pioneering—and it was particularly evident in Muskoka—is that after all this labour and hardship many settlements were destined to be abandoned so quickly that within a generation they had reverted to wild land. Port Vernon on Fox Lake was, in the 'seventies,

> quite a thriving little village, possessing two or three stores, two churches, a saw-mill, and about twelve or fourteen houses and a hotel. Captain Charles Hood was the presiding genius of the place, a fine-looking man in the late fifties. He was an eccentric individual, of grim determination and tireless energy. . . . Rumours of the railway passing through brought others to the place. . . . but the railway never came. It passed through Huntsville, and the changed route sounded the death-knell of the budding village.

> In the hey-day of its prosperity the name of Port Vernon was changed to Hoodstown in honour of Captain Hood. . . . Today there is absolutely no sign of there ever having been a building in the place. Every vestige has been swept away, and the bridge alone remains to show that at one time there was considerable traffic in the neighbourhood.

It was the same, usually for reasons related to poor productivity, in the case of many a smaller settlement. A visit to the locality half a century later, said DelaFosse, was 'a depressing pilgrimage'. A 'snug hamlet' had become nothing but a schoolhouse, one dwelling, and a stone church; and even in the church there was but scant mention of its founders. Clearings that had once grown crops had reverted to forest. Desolate graves by the roadside recalled a few of the pioneers; but in a village cemetery only four or five headstones still rose above the bracken. Though some prosperous farms indicated success, many of the farmers still looked as if they were existing on the very edge of civilization. Finally there was the clearing of Captain Martin, scene of our example of the farm-pupil racket:

> It would be impossible [wrote Fred DelaFosse] to give a really adequate description of the condition of the farm. There were about five acres of the original clearing in a state of cultivation. The remainder was just a wilderness of rocks and trees and shrubbery. Standing on the brink of the well-remembered precipice I saw the magnificent lake, and immediately below me the spot where once had stood the house which we had taken such infinite trouble to build. There was not a sign of a log or a board, and bracken and second-growth birch and balsam had taken over complete possession. It was as if the hand of man had never attempted to reclaim it. The barn, scene of so many untoward happenings, had also passed out of existence. Only a hole remained to mark its site.*

*In an earlier account DelaFosse says that he spent 4½ years as a farm pupil at £100 per year. Then, having expended almost all his money and being disgusted with the life, he started out 'from scratch' on a series of disillusioning adventures in the Canadian West. (See his 'Reminiscences of a Vagabond: 1883 and 1884', Thunder Bay Historical Society, *Papers*, 1926-27 and 1927-28.)

CHAPTER VII

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES AND FAIRS

THROUGHOUT the period of pioneering, but particularly in the latter part, two agencies—agricultural societies and developments in machinery—were important in the improvement of farm methods and techniques; and they were supplemented among the more educated and enterprising by farm journals and newspapers, at first largely of American publication.

The most widespread association of an occupational nature in the pioneer period was the agricultural society. Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake) had one in 1793, though it was largely social and due to Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe's suggestion and support. There was some informal discussion of crops at the dinner meetings, but no lectures appear to have been given. Simcoe awarded £10 annually as a premium for agricultural advancement, as well as a set of Arthur Young's *Annals of Agriculture.** An agricultural fair is known to have been held at Queenston before 1800.

Delayed by the War of 1812, not until the eighteen-twenties were other such societies formed. One near Kingston is of special interest because of its emblem, which included all the tools in general farm use—plough, harrow, rake, sickle, scythe, hoe, and two-tined fork; though as far as the backwoodsman was concerned a more characteristic selection would have been the felling axe, broadaxe, handspike, hoe, and brush-hook or bushwhack. As a considerable number of agricultural fairs were held spring and fall in the 'twenties, there were no doubt many farm societies of which no record has come down to us, though some of them are referred to in the newspapers which became common in the eighteen-thirties.

As early as 1820 the government encouraged both fairs and agricultural societies by grants of £100 to districts; but the aid was not great, for besides district societies there might be town, village, and township organizations, most of them with fairs. The membership fee was usually 5s., and both farmers and men prominent in other fields of activity were officers. Ploughing matches were sometimes part of the fair, but they were as often held separately under the auspices of the association. Both the old type of power—oxen, and the newer—horses, were used in these contests.

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*This famous work was issued periodically in 47 volumes between 1784 and 1809, and parts of a 48th appeared in 1812 and 1813.

In many townships the fair of the local agricultural society centred at a convenient tavern, or perhaps it was first held on the farm of one of the more progressive settlers. The Islington Fair, for example, had as its original location a large tent on the property of Mrs. R. H. Tier on the south side of Dundas Street. Success and prosperity commonly resulted in a Fair Ground, with various permanent buildings for exhibits, stabling, etc., and the inevitable racetrack.

County agricultural societies were authorized in 1851 on the basis of fifty members subscribing 5s. each, whereupon the provincial government would subsidize the association by a grant up to £250; but township societies, if formed, were entitled to a share of that grant. Fairs were usually held by the societies, and as it was lawful 'for every person to sell ale, beer, cider, or other liquors not spirituous, in booths erected on the streets', it was not only in frontier regions that brawls and riots disturbed the peace.

The County of Renfrew is perhaps foremost in having recorded the history of its two agricultural societies—South Renfrew and North Renfrew, compiled respectively by Harry J. Walker and Mrs. Carl Price in 1953 and 1957, the years of their centennials. Surviving records of the societies, and newspaper accounts of their fairs and other proceedings, list prizewinners in every branch of agriculture and domestic manufacture, and sometimes horticulture as well. The older quaint names, like Renfrew-on-the-Bonnechère (known to lumbermen as 'the Second Chute') bring back the past effectively, while social life is recalled by accounts of threshing parties on the crude barn floor (the flail being called 'the poor man's stick'), logging, clearing, and barn-raising bees, corn-shocking, pig-killing, and quilting, each with its dance to the fiddler's interpretation of *Boney O'er the Alps*, *The Deil Amang the Tailors*, and *Bear Over the Mountain*.

The improvement of stock was among the earliest aims of agricultural societies. Stallions and bulls, particularly of local breed, were exhibited, and the prizewinners were often made available to farmers interested in improving their horses and cattle. Sheep and hogs were not generally considered of the same importance and were not as much stressed at fairs. On at least one occasion the York society bought prize bulls in New York State at a cost of £100 each.

All sorts of farm products were awarded prizes at fairs. The best grain, peas, potatoes, lesser vegetables, and fruits, in numerous classes, received prizes. Dairy products, especially butter and cheese, became more important as the years passed. Domestic manufactures in straw, wool, linen, flannel, and leather were prominent at some fairs, and brooms, hats, bonnets, and other products of the home were frequently included. Sewing, embroidery, and fancy-work were more characteristic of later than early fairs, for few women on bush farms had any time for such industries.

The meetings of societies were devoted to talks and discussions on improved methods of clearing land, grain culture, crop rotation, and implements. Sometimes a model of a new development or farm machine would be exhibited, with endorsements of farmers who had tried it and found it useful. Frequently prizes were offered for the district's best-managed farm—based upon fences, cultivation, and the neatness and utility of farm buildings. On at least one occasion, in the Bathurst District, £5 was offered for the best servant or agricultural labourer who had been with one employer for the longest period; and in the same early period an award was made for the best road in front of a settler's lot.

The first provincial organization, the Upper Canada Agricultural and Commercial Society, lasted—in spite of its inclusive nature—only about a year in York, 1806-7, and no effort seems to have been made to revive it. But local fairs were being held semi-annually at Port Hope, Cobourg, and York in the early 'twenties, those at York lasting six days, the other two four. The typical division was a day devoted to exhibits and the award of premiums, a second for the sale of horses, a third for cattle, sheep, and hogs, and the fourth for domestic manufactures. Because of the harvest the autumn fair was always the more important. There was a one-day fair at Perth in 1829, concluded by a horse-race. Perhaps it was such a one as Edward

Talbot saw in 1820, though his description is no doubt overdone and exaggerated as customary with him, for he delighted to paint the country and its people in the worst possible colours. Here is his account of the horserace and the curious wagers he heard offered:

> I once went to a horse-race that I might witness the speed of their sorry *chevaux* as they cantered over a quarter of a mile course. Four horses started for a bet of 10,000 *feet of boards*. The riders were clumsy-looking fellows, bootless and coatless. Before they started every one seemed anxious to bet upon some one or other of the horses. Wagers were offered in every part of the field, and I was soon assailed by a host of fellows, requesting me to take their offers.
>
> The first who attracted my notice said he would bet me *a barrel of salt pork* that Split-the-wind would win the day. When I refused to accept of this, another offered to bet me 3,000 *cedar shingles* that Washington would distance 'every d----d scrape of them'. A third person tempted me with a wager of *50 lbs. of pork sausages* against *a cheese of similar weight* that Prince Edward would be distanced. A fourth, who appeared to be a shoemaker, offered to take a raw ox-hide against half its weight in *tanned leather* that Columbus would be either first or second. Five or six others, who seemed to be partners in *a pair of blacksmith's bellows*, expressed their willingness to wager them against *a barrel of West Indian molasses* or twenty dollars in cash. In the whole course of my life I never witnessed so ludicrous a scene.

Fairs in backwoods districts were characterized by wild fights. At Bytown (Ottawa) they were prohibited after the first one in July 1829 ended in a riot between *grangers* (lumbermen) and *shiners*, who were Irish labourers on the Rideau Canal. W. P. Lett, poet-historian of the capital, describes the fair:

'Twas not to buy or sell they came
From far and near, the blind and lame,
The grave, the merry, and the gay,
Upon that old eventful day:
They all assembled, wild and free,
To have a ranting, roaring spree.

. . . .

Thus ended Bytown's first old Fair,
A Donnybrook most rich and rare.

A few years later the neighbouring village of Richmond had semi-annual fairs described as 'the occasions of wild brawls between the lumbermen and ex-soldiers, when excited with drink; but at times a gigantic Irish priest, Father Peter Smith, used to scatter the combatants with a long whip'.

Elections, militia parades, and religion were also the cause of riots. The following letter, dated at Perth, U.C., May 4, 1824, was from magistrates and others to Lieutenant-Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland:

> A special meeting of the magistrates of the District of Bathurst having been convened, they beg leave to state for the information of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, that the township of Ramsay and its vicinity is in a most disturbed state, that the peaceable inhabitant is in terror of his life, and at this busy season of the year, when the farmer should be providing for his family, he is compelled to abandon his house and seek for refuge in the woods (as an outlaw) for the preservation of his life; that these outrages and breaches of the peace are committed by the emigrants from the south of Ireland, lately arrived under the superintendence of the Hon. Peter Robinson, who set all law at defiance and avow that they will submit to no jurisdiction but their own, nor obey any peace officers unless overpowered by force.
>
> That on the 23rd of April, at the muster of part of the 4th Carleton Militia, a riot took place; that the doors and windows of a Mr. Alexander Morris's house were broken and his life threatened by these people. In consequence of these threats, after having repaired the damage his house had sustained, he fled to Perth for protection; that on Monday, the 26th April, upwards of one hundred men of the same party assembled in a riotous manner and marched in seeming military order, and appeared regularly to obey the commands of an individual; that they marched with music and displayed a green flag, and having arrived at the house of the said Morris, they repeated their violent conduct by breaking open the door, entering the house and destroying his property. In consequence of numerous complaints . . . a party of constables, under the deputy sheriff . . . proceeded for the purpose of apprehending the rioters.
>
> When the constables arrived at Shepherd's Falls (the depot of these emigrants), the former were divided into two divisions; one party went to the depot, the other to a blacksmith's shop (where they were in the habit of assembling), on their approach to which they were fired at from the inside of the house and one of the constables wounded, in consequence of which the fire was returned and one killed and two wounded of the party inside the house. . . . We are of the opinion that nothing short of a party of regular troops, to be stationed for some time in the neighbourhood of these people, can restore peace and confidence to the good and well-disposed inhabitants.*

But in the longer-settled and more civilized regions things were very different. Sir James Alexander attended a fair and ploughing-match at Waterloo, near Kingston, in 1832, and his account of it neatly summarizes the advantages of such meets to the farming population:

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*Public Archives of Canada, Emigration Report, p. 336, part 1.

I stayed several days in Kingston. One afternoon I rode out with Colonel Wright, R.E., to see a ploughing-match and show of cattle at the village of Waterloo, some miles off, and I could have fancied myself at a similar exhibition at home. The faces around me were almost all Scotch, as was the conversation, but the manner of ploughing was different. A pair of oxen was attached to each plough, without a driver and without reins to guide them; they did their work obeying the voice of the man who held the stilts. Premiums for home manufactures (as coarse cloth prepared by the women) were given, and from these meetings of the farmers the best results follow: people become acquainted, prizes render them emulous of excelling, and they observe and imitate what is superior in their neighbours.

The interest in ploughing matches has continued into modern times, though perhaps with not quite the same spirit of rivalry. A century ago teams of ploughmen frequently met to decide the championship among townships. A neutral location might be chosen, and great crowds came to enter into the rivalry. In 1850 there was a contest between Vaughan and Scarborough townships, and Scarborough carried off £50 ($200) in prize money.

On north Yonge Street, at Richmond Hill, a quarterly fair was established in 1833 for 'buying and selling all kinds of stock, produce, and farming utensils, likewise the hiring of labourers'. At a fair in 1836 in Napanee 108 horses, 100 cows, 47 oxen, and 40 young cattle were offered for sale, as well as 1200 bushels of grain. But commercial depression in the 'forties ended most fairs, and it was said in 1850 that they were 'so few and far between that they are but little known and less heard of'.

Yet a few years later the times had improved and fairs had revived. When the Hamilton Township Agricultural Society and Farmers' Club met on January 12, 1856, it followed a pattern of many years in electing officers, hearing a paper on 'The Supreme Qualities of Ayrshire Cows as Milkers', and entering upon a discussion of the subject. Often in the spring a ploughing match for both men and boys followed the morning meeting, and a banquet with all the trimmings and toasts concluded the day's proceedings. In the same period the Cavan Township Agricultural Society was holding September exhibitions of stock, grain, butter, cheese, vegetables, and domestic manufactures, as well as a ploughing match. Apart altogether from farm produce, prizes were awarded to such items as 'best piece of females' woollen apparel', 'best piece of striped

N. Currier print

L. Maurer

PREPARING FOR MARKET

Canadian Illustrated News

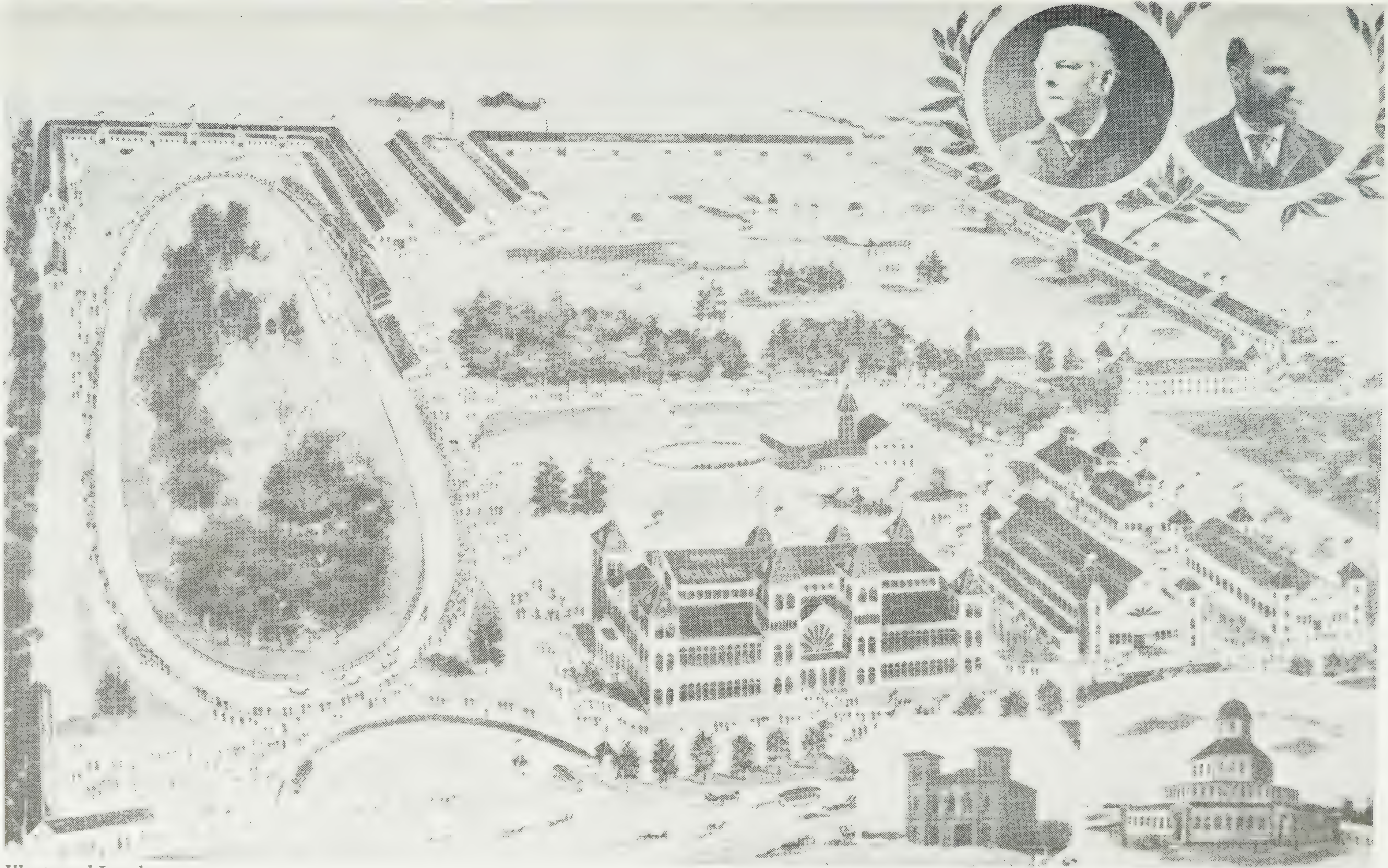
W. Cruickshank

PROVINCIAL PLOUGHING MATCH, HAMILTON, 1876 cloth', and 'best sole leather', as well as for the best harrow, bedstead, grain cradle, manure fork, washtub and pail, axe helves, and sawed boards.

The local fairs of later years followed a recognized pattern, but as the century drew to a close their agricultural nature was seriously threatened by the pressure of both commercialism and amusement. Too many people were coming merely to eat, drink, and be merry. Gambling at the racetrack had a long, if hardly beneficial, history, but fakirs, freaks, and dishonest concessions of one type or another were being added increasingly.

> In former years [wrote J. S. Carter in 1905] the morning of the fair was a time of unusual stir about the farm house. The lumber wagon was laden with varieties of grain, beets, mangel-wurtzels, the spreading heads of cabbage, huge pumpkins, large shapeless potatoes, and other products, while the good housewife contributed her quota of home-made linen and flannels and perhaps a display of old-fashioned rag carpet. The farmer and his family then secured quarters in the wagon, and all set off in a jolly mood for the fair.
>
> But these pioneer customs have greatly changed. The exhibitor and his wife and children no longer sit in the high wagon amid the sheep and cattle pens enjoying their noon-day lunch. Even the three-seated family carriage has suffered eclipse by the present handsome top buggies which convey the farmer and his family to the exhibition. The attention of the visitors is engrossed by horse-racing, trapeze, and high wire performances, the crazy clown or the strong man; no time, apparently, to glance at the products of home labour, the display of fat cattle, the lazy pigs, or the innocent sheep. In fact the event may be classed as a great visiting day, friends meeting friends. What changes Time has wrought!

In 1846 an important advance occurred with the establishment of the Agricultural Association of Upper Canada, which held its first Provincial Exhibition in Toronto on October 21st and 22nd on the Government House Grounds, at the corner of King and Graves (now Simcoe) streets. The cattle were exhibited in a meadow behind old Upper Canada College across the street. The first prizes were in cash totalling £287, and books on agriculture were second awards and diplomas third. Hundreds came into the city by steamship, stage, or in their own conveyances, and they were regaled by exhibits of 'light and chaste' vehicles, chaff-cutters, stump-raisers, and self-opening gates. There were 'beautiful, ornamental, and fantastic productions of the needle', including representations of King David playing on the harp and 'Joseph's dream surrounded



Illustrated London

WESTERN FAIR GROUNDS, LONDON

by sheaves of wheat nodding obeisance'. A great variety of arts and manufactures, including 'the wax flowers of Miss Elliott' (Yonge Street, Toronto), 'gained much admiration', and another attraction was a picture-map of Peterborough by 'Mr. Fleming, a young and promising artist from Scotland', later famous as Sir Sandford Fleming, Engineer-in-Chief in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Canadian Illustrated News

HORSE RING, PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION, LONDON, 1873

The next five exhibitions were held in other towns of the province, but in 1852 the Fair was back in Toronto. This time the grounds were on the west side of College (now University) Avenue, with the Horse Park extending into Mrs. D'Arcy Boulton's estate, 'The Grange', now the Art Gallery of Toronto. About 30,000 people attended this exhibition, and among the interesting things they saw were 'Mr. Palmer's Daguerrotypes', which 'excited much attention', Paul Kane's paintings, 'Kelly's first-rate cod-liver oil, all the way from Gaspé', and Mrs. Capreol's silver spade 'with which the first sod of the Northern Railway was *not* turned'.*

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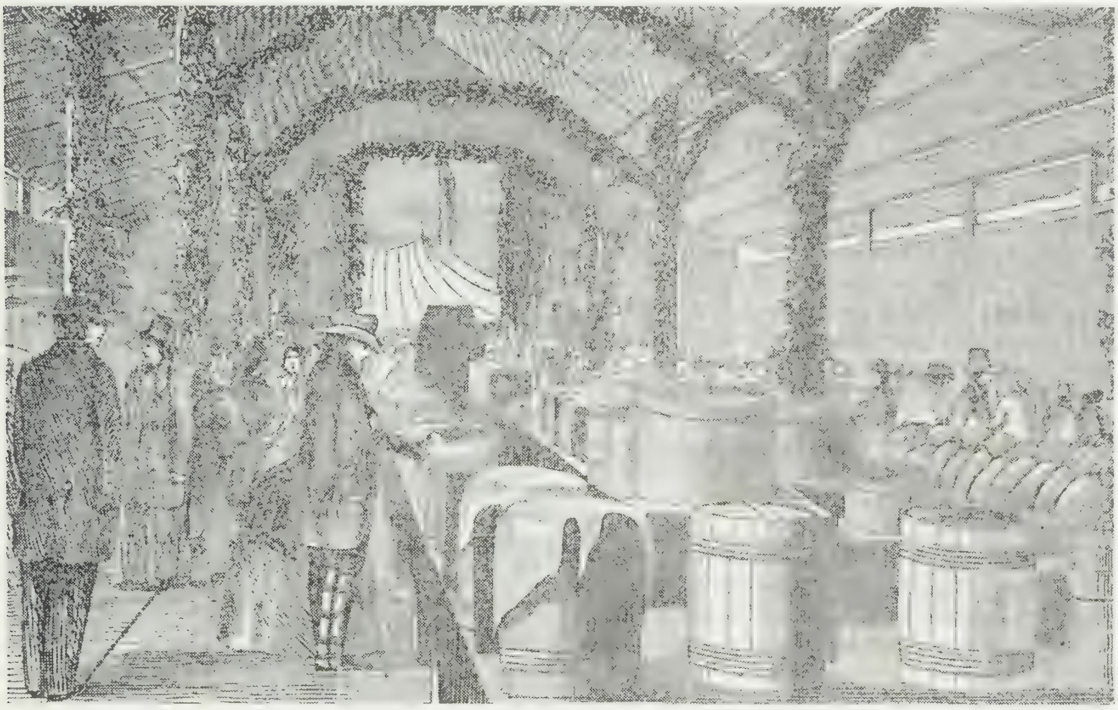
*Still in existence is the silver spade presented to Mrs. S. E. Mackechnie, wife of the mayor of Cobourg in 1853, on the occasion of the turning of the first sod for the construction of the Cobourg and Peterborough Railroad. It was preserved in the family of Mr. Alex. Black, Toronto, who gave it to the Archives of Ontario in 1958. The Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board has placed a plaque on the site where the sod was turned—at the corner of University Avenue and Railroad Street, Cobourg.

THE GROUNDS, PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION, TORONTO, 1852



THE AGRICULTURAL HALL

The woodcuts are from the old *Canadian Journal*

THE FLORAL HALL

The four-day show was opened by 'an imposing procession of several thousand people', and on the last two days the admission was only a York shilling (12½ cents). A band and the eighty horses on exhibit led the inaugural procession, with cows and 'apoplectic bulls', their horns fantastically decorated with gay ribbons, led along by proud exhibitors, 'conveyances of every possible description' following, and *hoi polloi* bringing up the rear. Among the prizes were the first awards for squashes, grown on the Gordon farms on Yonge Street—so large were the squashes that only with great difficulty could they be lifted. Captain Shaw, whose farm was near old Trinity College, Queen Street, was a prize-winner for similar mammoth squashes, as well as for sugar beets, broom-corn brush, hemp, and flax. Edward C. Scarlett of Etobicoke and Toronto won prizes for sawn pine and oak and for the best ox-yoke and bows, and Samuel Scarlett, Runnymede, for 'the best dozen turned broom handles'. Melodeons and seraphims in musical instruments, and grain cradles and grape preserves, attracted attention. The chief prizes for Leicester sheep went to John and George Miller of Markham and Nathaniel Cooper of Toronto Township.

TORONTO EXHIBITION GROUNDS, 1891

Dufferin Street wharf was important in the days when many visitors, even from the city, came on excursion steamships.

Nathan Choate of Hope Township and John Langstaff of Richmond Hill took all but one of the prizes for Merinos and Saxons; while Thomas Musson of Etobicoke and John P. Wheeler of Scarboro (usually so-spelled at that time) were prominent prize-winners for pigs.

While all parts of the province were represented by exhibits, it was to be expected that more from the Hamilton district exhibited in 1847, when the exhibition was held in that town, and more from the counties of Northumberland and Durham when the third exhibition was in Cobourg in 1848. The Cobourg show, in fact, was a pronounced success and a model for subsequent exhibitions. A high board fence enclosed an area of seven or eight acres to the west of the town, with pens for cattle, sheep, and swine, and three buildings near the centre for fine arts, domestic manufactures, flowers, grain, and vegetables. Horses were also exhibited, and agricultural implements were lined up in a row between the pens and the central sheds. An excellent carriage drive enabled the *élite* to view the fair's proceedings in style. Among the larger prizes was one of £25

Canadian Illustrated News

CENTRAL FAIR, HAMILTON, 1873

donated by the Canada Company for the best 25 bushels of fall wheat. Fine apples of various types were on exhibit, excellent vegetables, an extensive show of cheese—including Canadian Stilton from Guelph—and plenty of butter in rolls. The five-day show ended in a ploughing match for the farmers and a steeplechase for the gentlemen. An American visitor from Buffalo found the ploughing match highly amusing, and it was no doubt a typical performance:

> The ground was staked out in a very beautiful piece of tufted sandy loam, and twelve began the work. Never having seen the Scotch plough worked I trudged some two miles with a weary foot to the ground in the hope to see the Scotsman in his glory; but alas! each has his own way—a rod or two of furrow was turned, and if there were any imperfections the ploughman turned back to rectify with hand or foot as the case might require. At the end of the furrow the man and team rested, looking over and setting in apple-pie order every crooked or imperfect part. There was no specific time for the work to be done in; and although the work looked very well when

LOVEJOY HOUSE
C & J. MITCHELL'S LIVERY STABLES
C & J MITCHELL

Rowsell's Toronto Directory

MITCHELL'S LOVEJOY HOUSE, KING STREET, TORONTO, 1850

> done, 'thinks I to myself' if I had the same grace I might do the job as well.

The gentlemen's steeplechase stewards included Lord Mark Kerr, aide-de-camp to the Governor-General, a baronet, and a selection of Cobourg's 'aristocrats'. All riders had to be 'gentlemen'—whatever that implied—and the course was of two miles with plenty of hazards, leaps, and fences. Needless to say it was to the east of the town—the traditionally exclusive section—while the ploughing match was to the northwest, near the old Court House and in a fine farming district where the Burnhams had long been outstanding farmers and prominent and public-spirited citizens.*

The Exhibition of 1850, at Niagara, was subsidized to the extent of £600 by the government, and there were similar grants in succeeding years. In the 'sixties the Fair was restricted to Toronto, Hamilton, Kingston, and London. Not until 1879 was the Toronto Industrial Exhibition inaugurated as a great annual fair, and ten years later the Provincial Exhibition died out—or perhaps might be said to have been merged with the Toronto Fair, which was serving the purpose better.

Local agricultural societies increased greatly in the late 'fifties and 'sixties. In 1857 there were 42 county associations—one for every county in Upper Canada—and 182 township societies. From time to time additional associations were formed in newly-settled townships to the north, and horticultural societies, which began in the more progressive towns, increased the total, for it was apparent that they were an almost equal incentive to the introduction and successful culture of flowers, fruit, vegetables, and handicrafts. An example is afforded by the Cobourg Horticultural Society of 1859. There was a summer exhibition in July and an autumn show early in October. Some 500 people were present at the July exhibit, non-members paying a small admission.

> The Floral Department [wrote Secretary George Coventry] was truly beautiful, and the collection of bouquets displayed a taste highly creditable to the ladies in the vicinity, who, we are happy to record, are in general remarkably fond of gardens, greenhouses, and conservatories. . . . It is gratifying to find that most of the new settlers who arrive from the Old Country bring the finest seeds with them, and have friends at home interested in the welfare of the colony who annually send out boxes for distribution among their friends.

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*See Vol. I, p. 64, for a photograph of the Hon. Zacheus Burnham's home.

Harriet Clench

FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

The artist, daughter of a noted Cobourg cabinetmaker, married Paul Kane. This pencil sketch is reproduced by courtesy of F. H. H. Lowe, Ninette, Manitoba, nephew of the artist.

The Cobourg Brass Band enlivened the proceedings, and gaslight—but a few years old in Cobourg and a distinct novelty anywhere—illuminated the show. At the exhibitions of this society one saw, in addition to fine flowers, fruits, and vegetables, a variety of arts and crafts. A. J. Burnham, representative of a prominent pioneer family, won every prize for apples bited an aquarium containing goldfish, Egyptian lilies, and except one second. E. C. Clench, noted cabinet-maker, exhi- aquatic weeds, while his daughter Harriet, later the wife of the Canadian pioneer artist, Paul Kane, was among those who loaned their own paintings and sketches* to beautify the walls; and Miss Stephens' case of hair jewellery, which had won a prize at the 1859 Provincial Exhibition, was much admired. More than once at these exhibitions Mrs. Catharine Parr Traill exhibited her fine collection of Canadian wild flowers. Alto-

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*The writer has located a few examples of Harriet Clench's work, but most of it seems to have disappeared.

Courtesy Mrs. George Irwin

FAIR DAY, GORE BAY, MANITOULIN ISLAND, ABOUT 1900

gether such events formed a notable assemblage of the culture and artistry of the district, an evidence that the finer things of life were not entirely suppressed amid the exigencies of pioneer conditions.

For many years the Provincial Government offered a prize and gold medal for the best-conducted farm in the province. A notable example of the farms which won the award is that owned by Simpson Rennie. Known as Kelvin Grove Farm, it was lot 30, concession 5, Scarboro Township, and won the prize in 1883 and 1886. In spite of the fact that it lacked any creeks, ravines, or other natural beauties, the Rennie farm was yet judged the most orderly and well-arranged. There were no costly buildings, no display, but everything was as neat as a pin. Not a stick or a stone disfigured the farm, which was throughout kept like a garden by people who took pride in work well done. All the fences were accurately made, without the slightest variation in height. The farm buildings were conveniently arranged and spotlessly clean, and there was a flourishing orchard. A fine Norway-spruce hedge kept off the winds of winter and beautified the farm surroundings, and altogether it was no accident that Kelvin Grove and its products won numerous prizes and public acclaim.*

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*The co-operation of schools in encouraging better agriculture is generally more recent. In the High Schools of Dufferin County short courses were once given in judging stock and seed. A school fair of six rural schools was held at Laurel, with exhibits from the home farms of the pupils.

It may be argued that in many regions a mere handful of the more progressive farmers were the driving force behind agricultural societies, and that the great mass took no part. The same limitation applied, of course, to subscriptions to farm journals like the *Genesee Farmer* or the *Canada Farmer*, and to the farmers' clubs, Women's Institutes,* and farmers' picnics that came to be organized in many districts. But this is true in all the activities of life, and if the majority came to fairs to gamble and to be amused, it is still highly important that a lesser number received an incentive to improvement and were inspired by what they saw. At the middle of the century nearly 100,000 people occupied lots of ten acres or more in Upper Canada, and while the great majority were undoubtedly incapable of, or at least averse to agricultural advances engendered by lectures or reading, not a few of them joined in the progress when they could see at fairs what their neighbours were doing, and particularly if it was likely to put a few dollars in their pocket. The accomplishments of these early associations were highly satisfactory for the times and conditions in which they were formed.

ADELAIDE HOODLESS
1857-1910
Founder of the Women's Institute.

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*The founding of Women's Institutes by Adelaide Hoodless at Stoney Creek in 1897 was an innovation of world importance. Three of the charter members are still living, and the movement has spread to 46 countries with a membership of 6,500,000. The status of rural women has improved everywhere as a result.

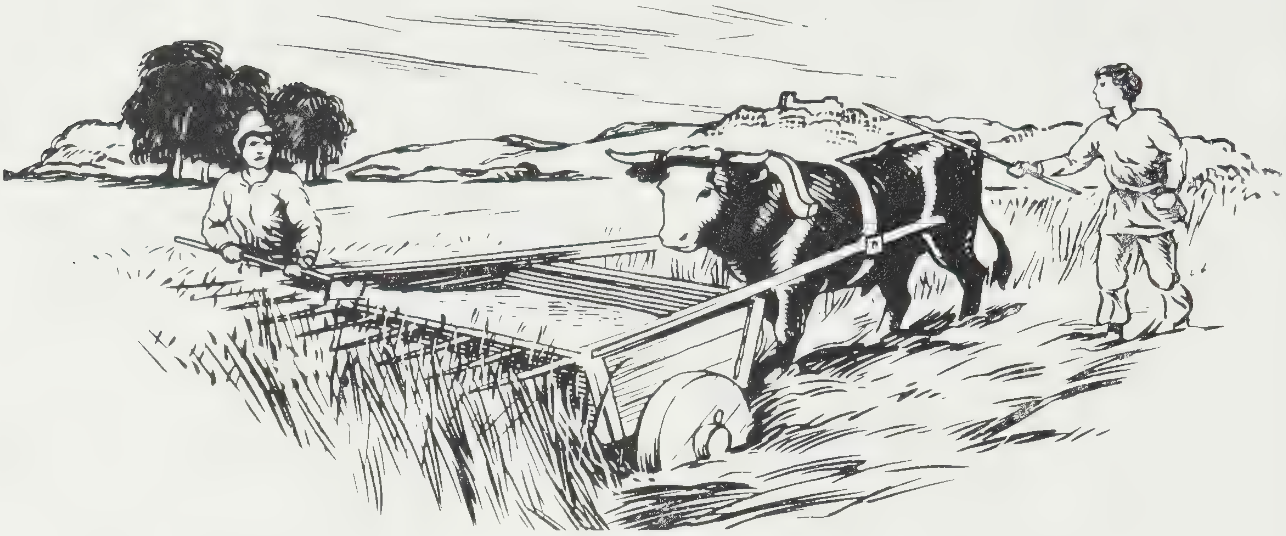
CHAPTER VIII

THE EVOLUTION OF FARM MACHINERY

PIONEERING in Ontario was at first but little affected by developments in farm machinery that were taking place in contemporary Britain; and there had been other advances much earlier which were not reflected in Canadian farm practices. Actually the ancient Gauls had a mechanical harvester about 100 A.D., for one is described by Pliny. The device consisted of a square box on wheels or runners which was pushed by oxen into standing grain. On the upper edge of the box were knives set close together which stripped off the heads of the grain, and they fell into a box behind. Towards the close of the 18th century a British inventor, Robert Salmon of Bedfordshire, first developed the same principle in modern times. His process is described as

> a cutter bar consisting of two sets of serrated or saw-tooth knives which moved back and forth one above the other and were given a reciprocating motion by a pitman or connecting-rod attached to the axle. The knives were adjustable to various heights of grain, and projecting fingers in front of the knives held the grain while being cut.

Salmon's primitive machine had a guard or divider which separated the standing grain from that which was to be cut, and also a rake or paddle which swept the cut grain off a delivery platform. But it was the end of the century before Henry Ogle adapted Salmon's invention into a usable machine by adding a horizontal reel which rotated and swept the grain against the knives and then on to the platform. This mower was drawn from front and side and had a seat for the driver. In 1823 these machines were said to have the capacity of mowing fourteen acres per day—some four or five times what



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

THE GALLIC STRIPPER

a man could accomplish with the cradle; but their use was restricted in England by farm labourers' threats of violence.

A few years later Patrick Bell's reaper, 'a beautiful piece of mechanism', cut the grain in similar fashion, and by an endless conveyor-belt of canvas laid it in a swath on one side of the machine. As Bell did not patent his invention it was copied by various people in Britain and the United States, and was being widely used in the eighteen-thirties. The inventor spent four years in Upper Canada at this time, acting as tutor in the family of the Honourable Adam Fergusson, and he is known to have brought with him in 1833 a scale model of his invention.

Four Bell reapers reached the United States about the same time, and though the destination of only one has been traced, the others—or plans of them—no doubt came to the notice of American inventors like William Manning and Obed Hussey. The Hussey Reaper of 1834 was the first to be manufactured in quantity. It was compact in design, had a hinged frame, and an open guard which helped prevent the clogging of the knives. Cyrus E. McCormick patented his reaper the same year, and it eventually became the best known of all.

> The initial machine of early July [we are told] had a straight-edge reciprocating knife actuated by gears from the main wheel, shafts for a single horse, an outside divider to separate the standing grain from that to be gathered into the cutter-bar, and fingers to project in front of the blade. The late July machine had an improved divider, a better cutter-bar provided with saw-tooth incised serrations along its leading edge, and a reel to hold the grain in front of the knife.

Not until 1845 was the McCormick reaper produced in commercial quantities, so the Hussey machine had the field largely to itself for some years.

A comparison of the Hussey and McCormick reapers is of interest, for there was great controversy among the farmers of the 'forties and 'fifties as to their capabilities. The McCormick, which first appeared near Cobourg in 1847, threw the grain outside the track, so a whole field could be reaped before the binding of sheaves commenced; but it was generally considered too light and flimsy. The Hussey left the grain behind it, so it had to be bound before the machine came round again, requiring the work of some eleven men—one driving the horses, one raking the stalks off the platform, and nine binding them into sheaves. Both machines could reap ten to fifteen acres per day. A prominent farmer near Port Hope wrote to a farm magazine that 'within three miles of my residence three or four of the McCormick machines have been tried for two or three years and abandoned, and the owners are now using the Hussey's machine to their complete satisfaction'. Apparently, however, the only McCormick reapers in Upper Canada at the time were obsolete models already out of use in the United States, and the dissatisfaction with them resulted from this fact.

Long before any type of reaper had been developed, Jethro Tull, almost a hundred years earlier, had invented in England a seed-drill and a horse-hoe or cultivator. About the same time, 1720, Joseph Foljambe's plow first used the conical iron point and the clevis, as well as the curved surface—the mouldboard—which lifts the topsoil and turns it over as a ribbon of soil.

In Upper Canada the first ploughs and improved harrows, like most other tools and implements, were usually made by the local blacksmith. Walter Riddell of Hamilton Township describes a number in early use in that locality—the Hill plow (Port Hope) and the Newton plow (Cobourg), among others. The Dutcher cast-metal plow, made in Toronto and sold at $7, was the same price as the 'American lap-furrow plow'; while others were popularly known as *hog* plows and *bull* plows.*

Even at the middle of the 19th century ploughs of every type were in use. Crude home-made ones—sometimes called Loyalist ploughs—were still to be found. They consisted of a beam from a crooked oak, a mouldboard split from a crooked maple,

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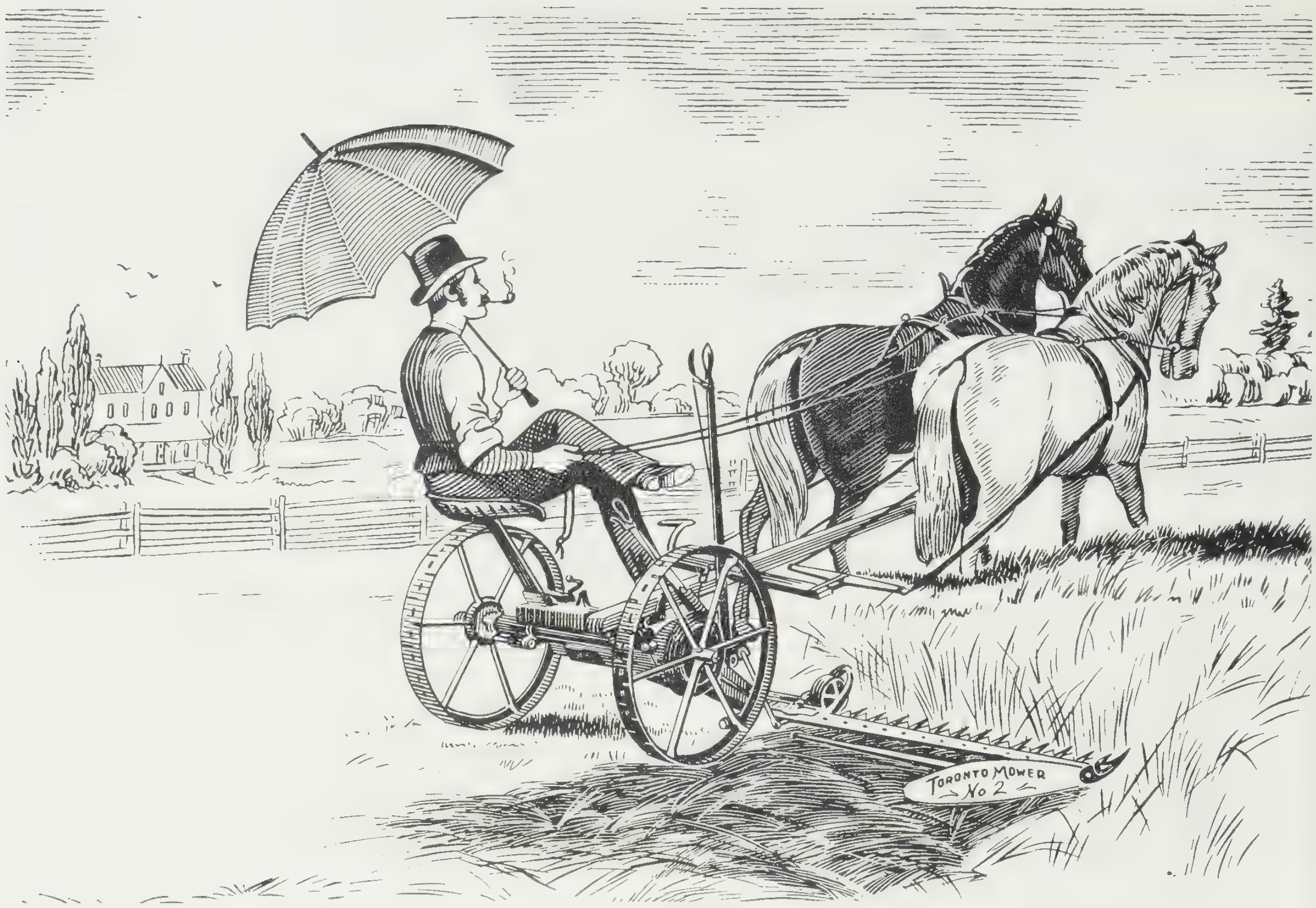
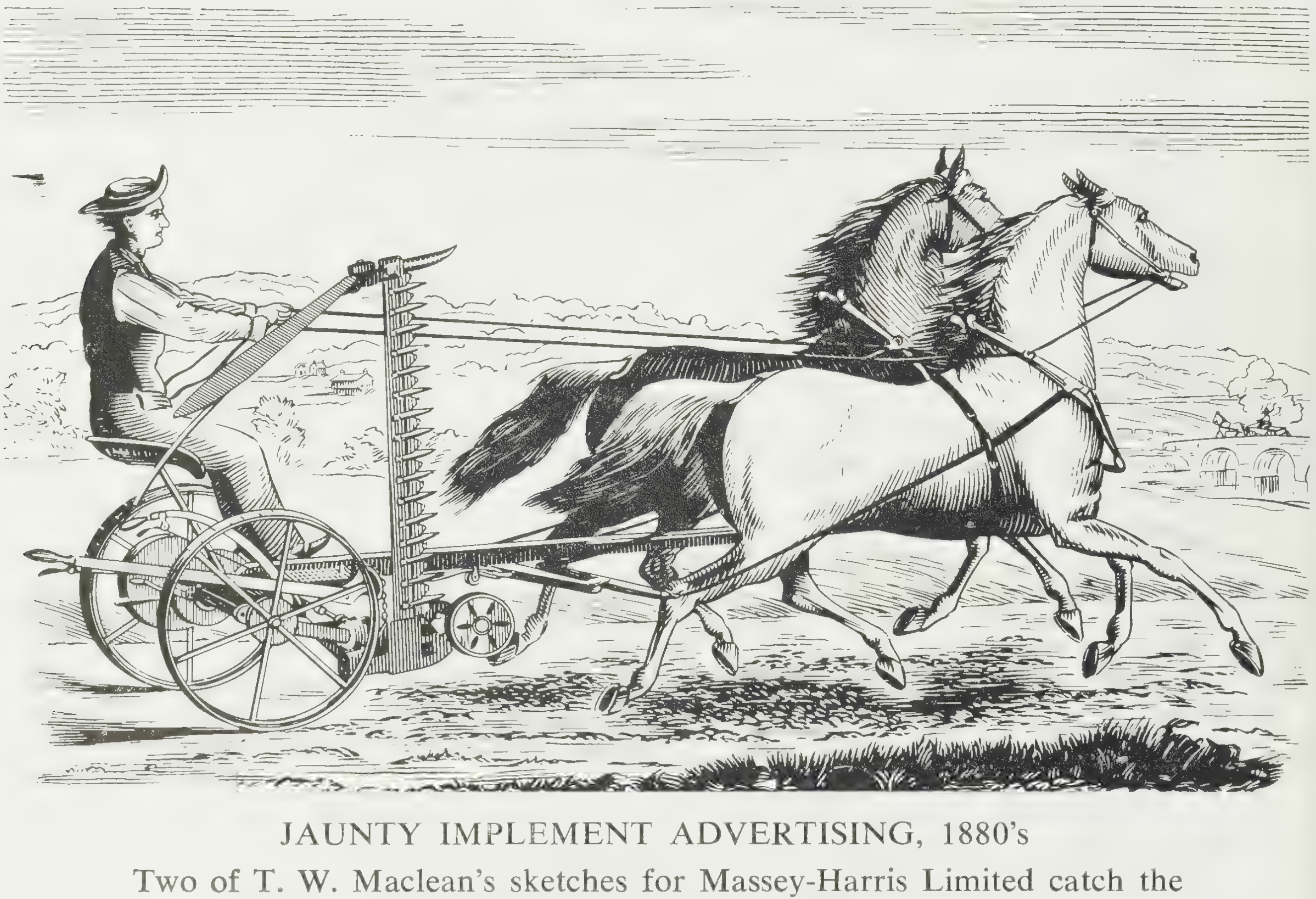
*A number of other towns and villages might be mentioned where agricultural machines, often believed in the locality to be the first in the province, were made and distributed; but they would be merely further examples of innumerable inventions designed and produced by blacksmiths, foundrymen, and farmers, some of whom developed the local farm implement factory which was characteristic of Ontario prior to amalgamation and the agency system.

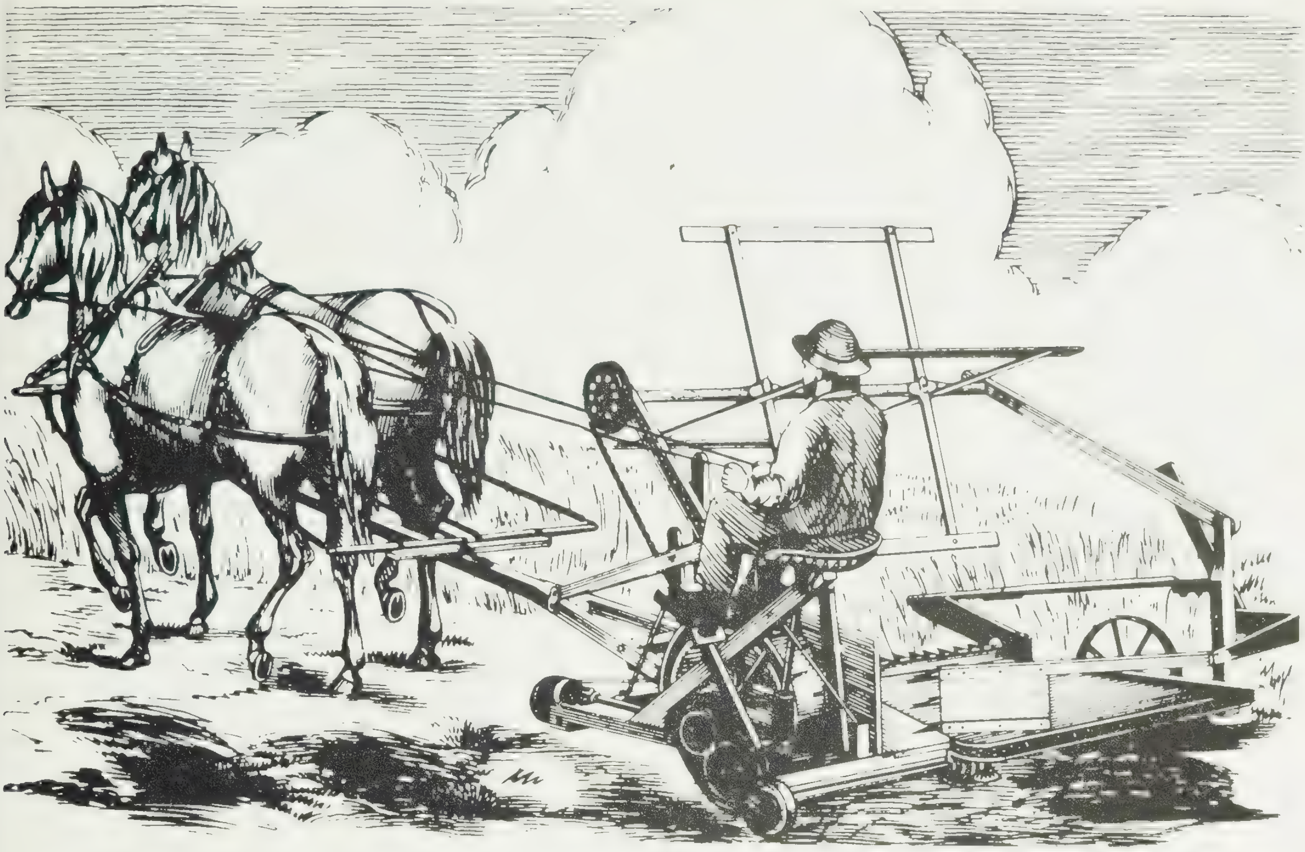


LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY SALES APPEAL



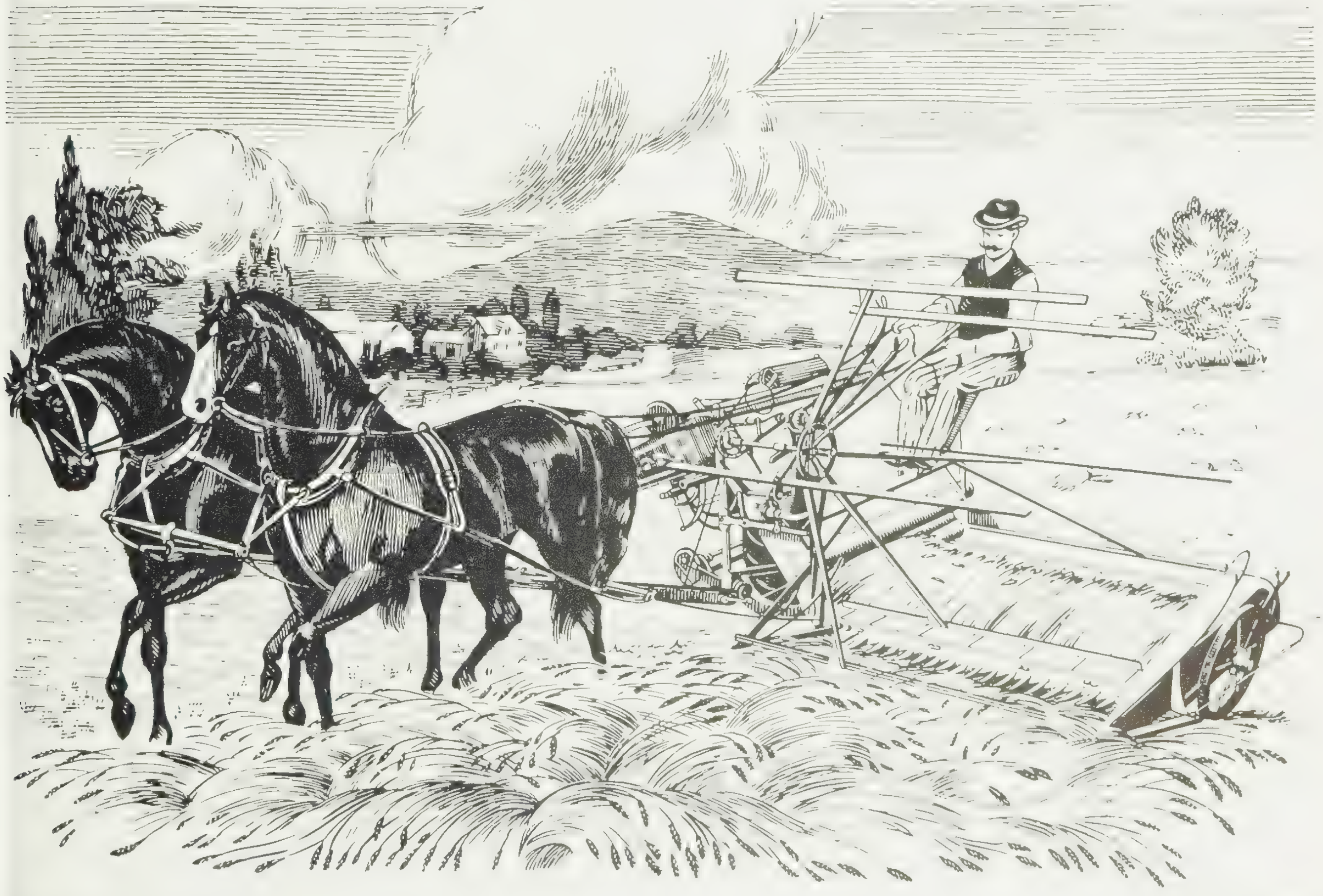
JAUNTY IMPLEMENT ADVERTISING, 1880's

Two of T. W. Maclean's sketches for Massey-Harris Limited catch the playful spirit of farm life as salesmanship would have it.



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

WOOD'S PATENT SELF RAKE REAPER



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

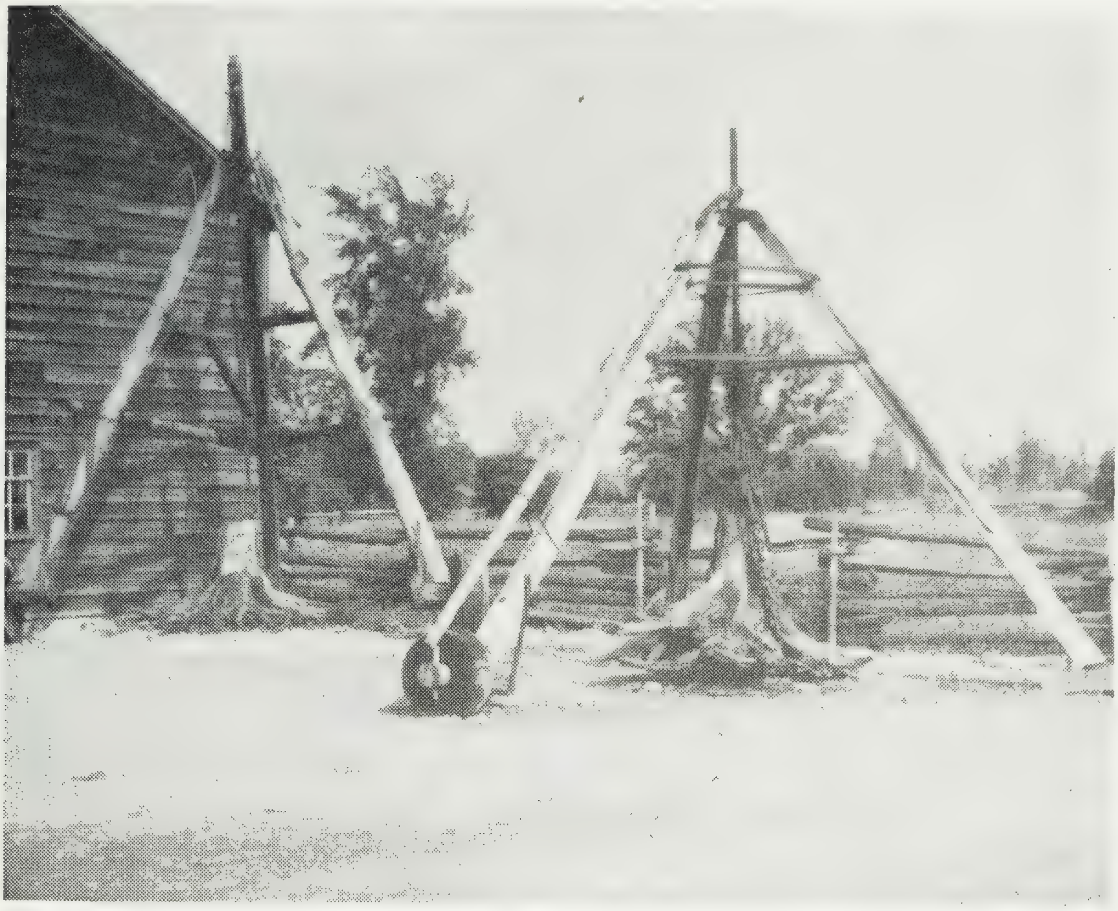
MASSEY TORONTO LIGHT BINDER, 1882

a straight pole for a handle, and an L-shaped piece of iron through the beam for a coulter. Then there were variations of the 'bar-share' or 'hog-plough', and American cast-iron ploughs, with mouldboard and share cast in one piece. And there were some 'Scotch swing' or wheel-less ploughs, a few of them imported and the rest made in Upper Canada with wooden mouldboards. Almost every type of implement was to be found —improved British models and 'an almost endless number of mongrels', as a farm magazine put it. Nearly every township had a plough in use with distinctive features not found in those adjacent; but in general, even at ploughing matches, the work done with them was not considered good by observers from other lands.

The first drill cultivators appear to have come into use in Canada West about 1850, with a two-horse variation in 1854. The results of their use were usually disappointing. There were but few seed-drills prior to the combined Broadcast Seeder and Cultivator of the early 'seventies; and sometimes drills were attached to it. Turnip-seed drills were found much earlier, one made by F. Burnet being used about 1837 in Hamilton Township.

Stumping machines appear to have been largely of American make. A pioneer settler in Windham Township, Norfolk County, said one he had of a claw-hammer type was the earliest in that region, and that Nelson Colt of Rochester helped him build it. It was worked with a set of pulleys, and he used it until it killed an ox. A lever machine was next, a large one costing $170, and it was worked by three men and a yoke of oxen. Later was the screw machine, for which a set of irons alone cost $80. Some stump eradicators took a machine from farm to farm, removing stumps at $5 a day and board. The cost per acre was $5 to $30, varying with the type of tree and the size and number of stumps; and there was the additional expense of disposing of them, which usually required two days' labour of two men and a yoke of oxen for each acre.

> After the loggin' and grubbin' [said this Windham pioneer] we considered the land ready for cultivation. . . . When I stumped a patch for my first little orchard the diggin' of the big stumps cost me seventy-five cents each, and then it cost me 'bout as much to get rid of 'em an' fill up the holes. The pine stumps averaged about twenty-five to the acre, an' it cost about forty cents each, on an average, to have 'em pulled. Diggin' stumps by hand was a slow tedious job.



Photograph by the Author

STUMP-PULLERS, UPPER CANADA VILLAGE

He estimated that his land after clearing was not worth half what it had cost him to chop and stump, which he blamed largely on pine trees; but it shows the force of most settlers' opinion that the removal of stumps was too costly and should be left to nature and time.

Later in the century, in the 'eighties, the Steelyard stump-lifter was considered the last word in modern machines, and it became the subject of many a market-day gossip. Simple mechanism and great lifting power enabled it to be run over the ground, 'and every stump—large and small—was torn from the earth root-and-branch and dropped upon the surface with its intricate mass of green, wiry, snake-like roots exposed to sun and air'. Many of the stump fences still to be seen resulted from the activities of the famous Steelyard seventy-five years ago.

In 1847 an important milestone in Canadian agriculture was the opening by Daniel Massey of a small foundry near Newcastle, where simple implements of wood, and iron castings—plows, harrows, scufflers, rollers, sap and potash kettles—were manufactured. It is thought that five or six men made up the staff, and that fifty or sixty articles comprised the first year's production. Massey, settled much earlier east of Cobourg, had been a highly progressive farmer, and as early as 1830 he had brought over into Upper Canada a threshing-machine. It is said that it required twelve men to operate, but it paid for itself by rent from threshing the neighbours' grain. His first importation was of stationary type, but he later brought in a portable thresher, as well as new types of ploughs, cultivators, and fanning mills.

Massey had competitors, of course, like John Helm of Port Hope, who had been earlier in the business and was prominent in both making and importing machines. Perhaps there were two or three dozen such manufactories in the province when the Massey business commenced, and by the eighteen-sixties almost every town and village seems to have had at least one plant of the kind, as well as, in the province generally, a large number of importers of American farm machinery. Eventually these local businesses were to give way to the 'dealer representation' development, but much earlier Massey-Harris had gradually incorporated a number of the larger manufactories in the firm, whose machines are now known all over the world.*

References to the chief machines made or imported by Massey will at the same time indicate the lines of progress. The Ketchum Mower, the first machine to cut hay and other animal fodder, was an American invention, and Massey obtained the patent rights for Canada in 1852.

> The principal features [writes Merrill Denison**] were a main drive wheel and, supported and activated thereby, a dropped rigid cutter-bar with reciprocating knives and finger guards, arranged to cut the solid juicy stalks of grass instead of the more brittle hollow stalks of grains. The mower could be used only on even level fields; inside of ten years it was looked upon as clumsy and antiquated, but it was rugged, simple, and compact, and at the time of its introduction was one of the most revolutionary farm tools ever produced.

This mower made a 4-foot-8-inch cut and retailed for $50, and it is said that Hart Massey himself spent much of the first summer demonstrating it in the hayfields of Durham County.

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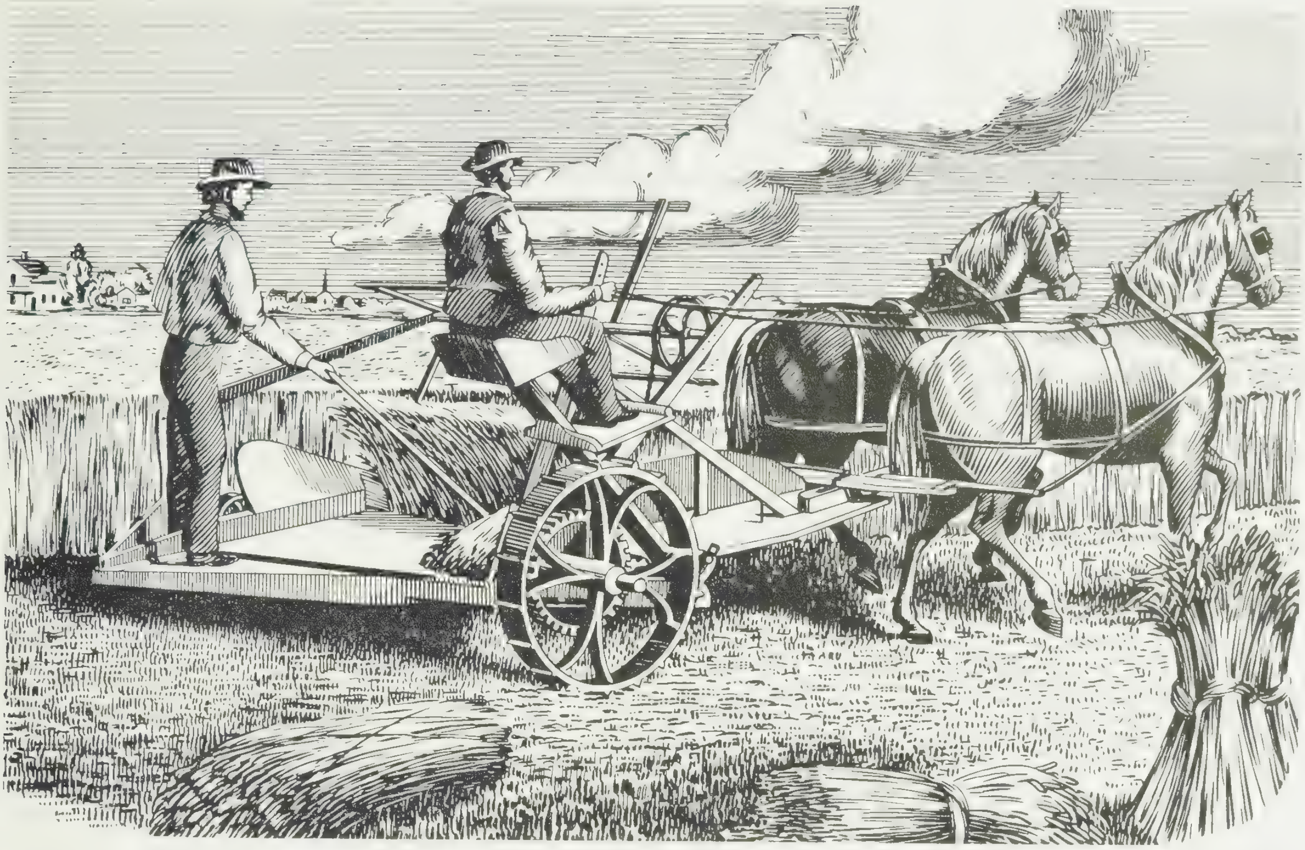
*It is significant that Vincent Massey, a direct descendant of the founder of the company so important in pioneering and progress, was in 1952 appointed first Canadian-born Governor-General of Canada.

**The authority on farm machinery is Merrill Denison's *Harvest Triumphant: the Story of Massey-Harris* (1948). Many of its excellent illustrations are reproduced in this volume by permission of Massey-Ferguson Limited.



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

JOHN P. MANNY'S HAND RAKE REAPER, 1851

International Nickel Ltd. Russell Taber

THE HORSE-POWER

Another patent importation was the Burrell Reaper, and it was speedily being made at the Massey plant. Thomas Windatt had one of the first of them about 1854, and John Squair describes its operation in his local history *The Townships of Darlington and Clarke*:

> Naturally there was a group of men and boys who gathered in the field to see the new machine at work, and they flung questions, gibes, and flippant remarks about it. The machine was attached to the forewheels of a wagon, and consisted of a cutter-bar with its driving gear, and a table behind the cutter upon which the grain fell.
>
> There was no reel to pull the grain toward the cutter, so that if the wind were blowing from behind the machine it was necessary to drive the horses very fast, even to trot them, in order not to run over the grain without cutting it. Three men worked the machine: one on a seat attached to the wagon bolster driving the two horses, and two others following with hand rakes, putting the grain off the table as soon as enough for a sheaf had been accumulated. Additional men, four or five in number, had to be distributed around the field to bind the sheaves and keep the way clear for the machine.

Within a year or two a better machine, the Manny Combined Hand-Rake Reaper and Mower, provided an advance in harvesting machinery. It had an extended table which had space for a second man to ride the reaper and put the sheaves clear of the next round of the machine. This is said to have been the first reaper to meet with general approval in Canada West. It sold for from $120 to $130, according to whether the cutter-bar was of wood or steel. It is apparent, however, that only the owners of long-cleared and successful farms could afford such prices in a day when money was scarce.

In 1857 the Massey Company was advertising, among steam-engines and other heavy machinery, 'Thrashing Machines, 4, 6, and 8 horsepower' (operated by sweeps or treadmills with horses), fan blowers, cultivators, seed drills, harrows, and field rollers, and nine varieties of ploughs—the Markham, Scotch Canadian, Iron Beam, Improved Norton, Polley, Side Hill, Sub Soil, and Double Mould-board.* Rollers were of wood, and their first use was to smoothe the autumn-sown wheat-field in the spring.

James B. Ryan, 114 Yonge Street, Toronto, further indicated what was available at the time, for he advertised in the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition* (1858):

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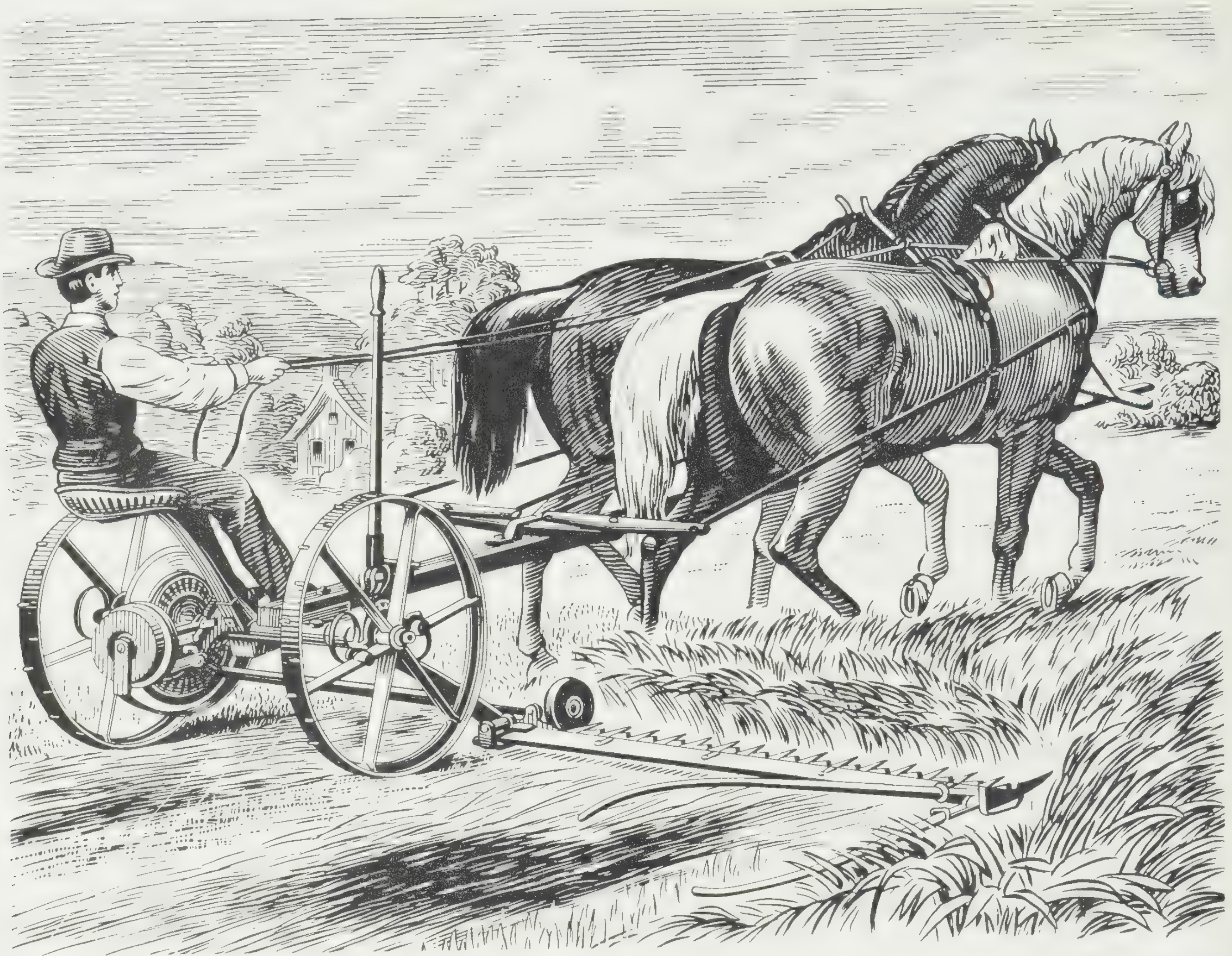
*While several local historical museums have ox-bows and numerous small farm tools and implements, the best collection is probably in the Museum of Farm Implements at the Dominion Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

> Ploughs, Cultivators, Horse Hoes, Harrows, Grain Drills, Horse Rakes, Hay and Straw Cutters, Churns, Corn Shellers, Vegetable Cutters, Garden Engines, Grain Cradles, Scythes, Forks, Hocks, Rakes, Spades, Shovels, Meat Cutters, Sausage Stuffers, Apple Parers, &c., of superior quality.

In the same booklet Adam Cant of Galt advertises for $28 his 'Patent Turnip or Root Cutter . . . adapted for cutting roots for all kinds of stock, as it cuts to size of strips and to thickness of slices at the rate of a bushel a minute'. Gleason's Tanning Mill, just patented, 'is one of the greatest inventions of the age for the Farmers', for it is 'very compact' and yet has 'greater capacity for cleaning'. Its sieves worked longitudinally, and the price varied from $18 to $22, according to size. The inventor, T. C. Gleason of Hamilton, offered $500 to anyone who could produce a mill made in America which 'will clean Grain as well and as fast'. And there was, besides, 'Parson's Improved Coal Oil Lamp' which, it was confidently announced, 'produces a Light of unsurpassed Brilliancy' without the possibility of explosion!

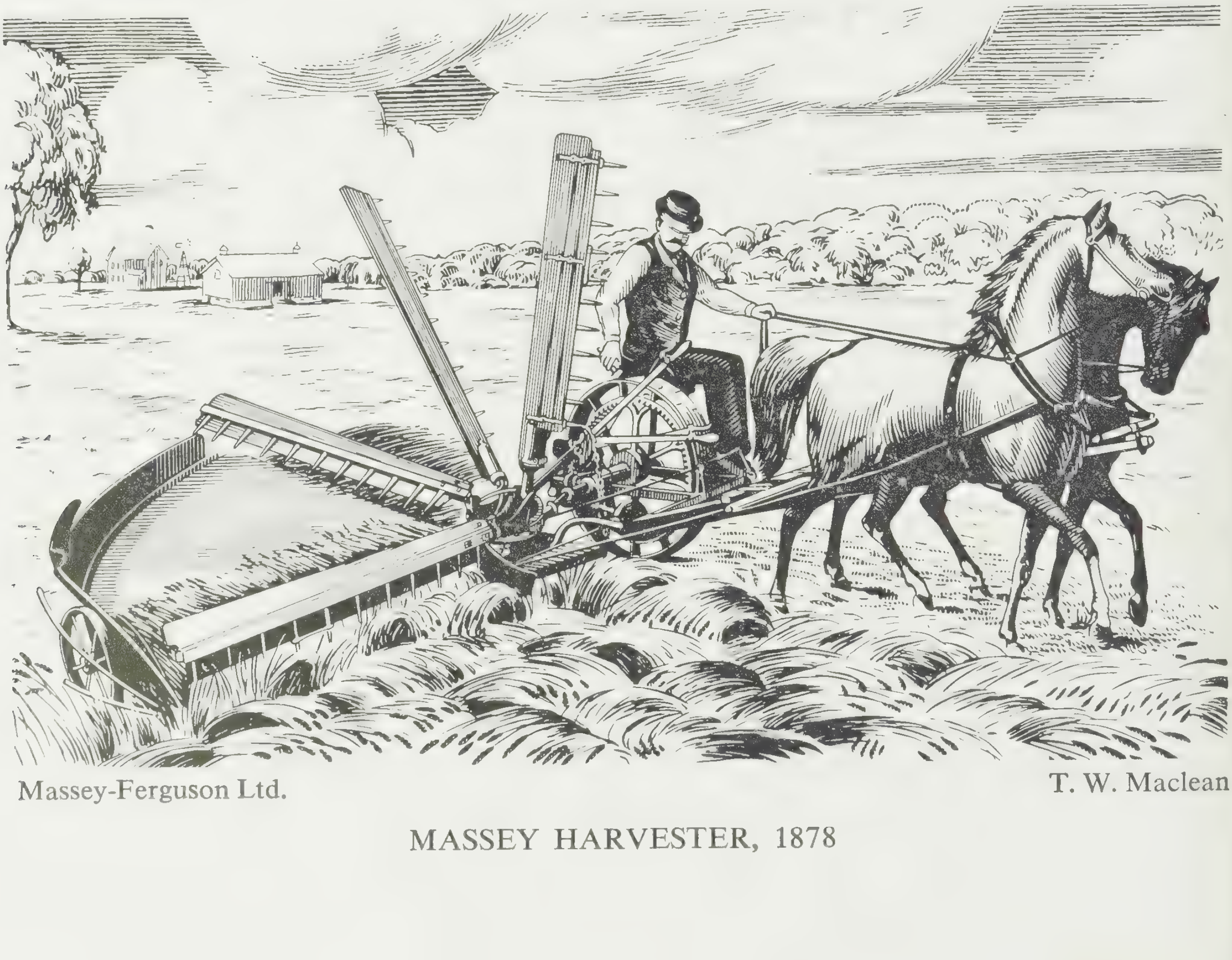
By 1860 the Massey Company had developed its imports much further. Imported threshing machines, separators, horse-powers, stump-pullers, feed-choppers, patent grist-mills, and some seventeen ploughs were available, in addition to the various mowers and reapers, horse-hoes and cultivators, revolving hay rakes, seeders, and fanning-mills that were made at Newcastle. Within a year or two Wood's Mower, a sensation in its day, was added as a self-rake reaper, and a boy with a team could cut twelve to fifteen acres of grain a day with it; but the sheaves still had to be bound and stooked by hand and the grain threshed by primitive horse-power. This fine machine won a Grand Prize at the Paris International Exposition, and it was the occasion of many a farm celebration in Canada West. Refinements of one kind or another were added as the years passed, but the basic machines were not to be greatly changed except by combination and by tractor power, which came much later.

Some reference to the introduction of the various machines into the province will be of interest. Walter Riddell of Hamilton Township, who kept a diary, says that all grain was cut by hand until 1843, when Daniel McKyes imported a Hussey Reaper from Rochester, believed to be the first in the province. We hear of the first one in Scarborough Township in 1851, but



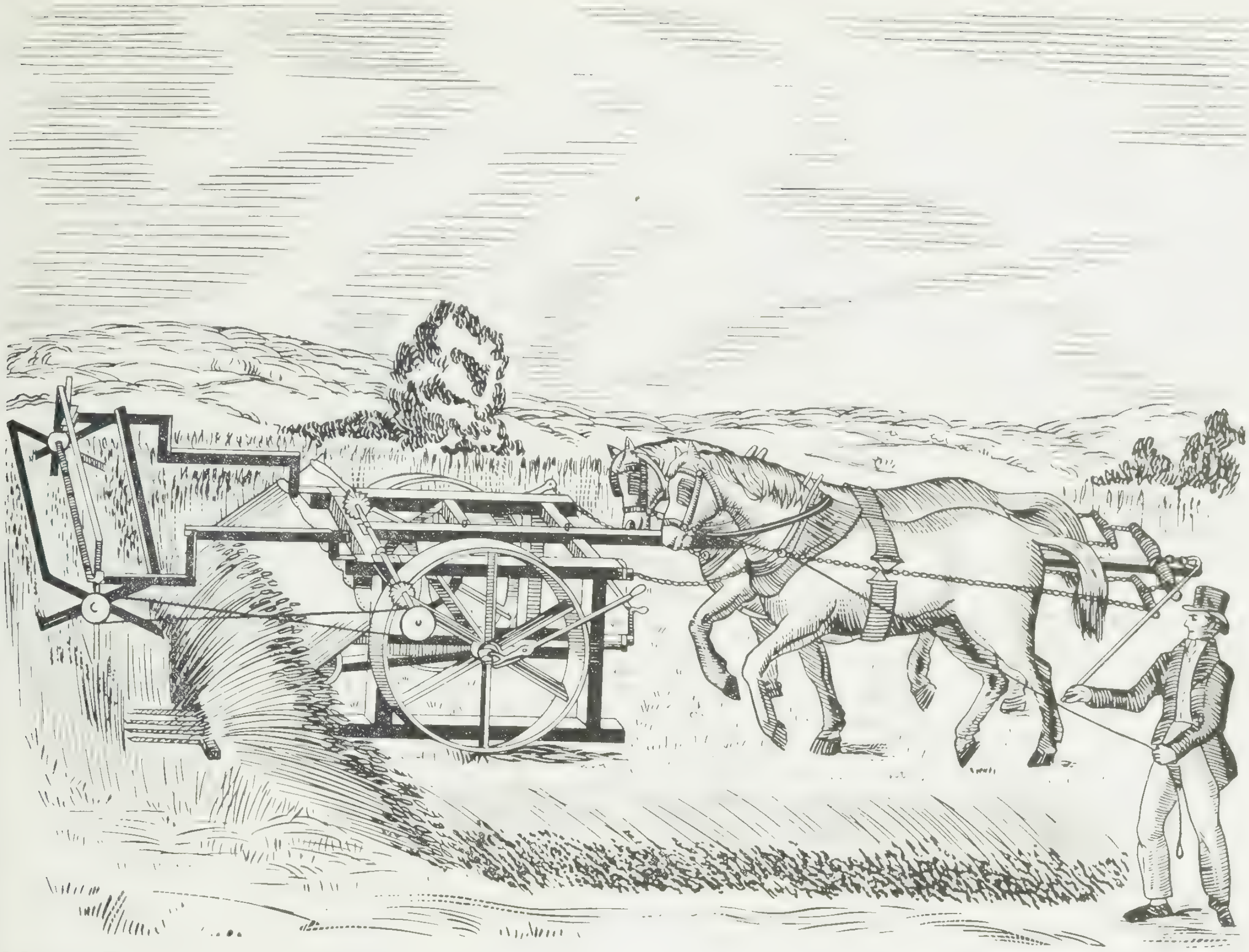
Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

MOWER



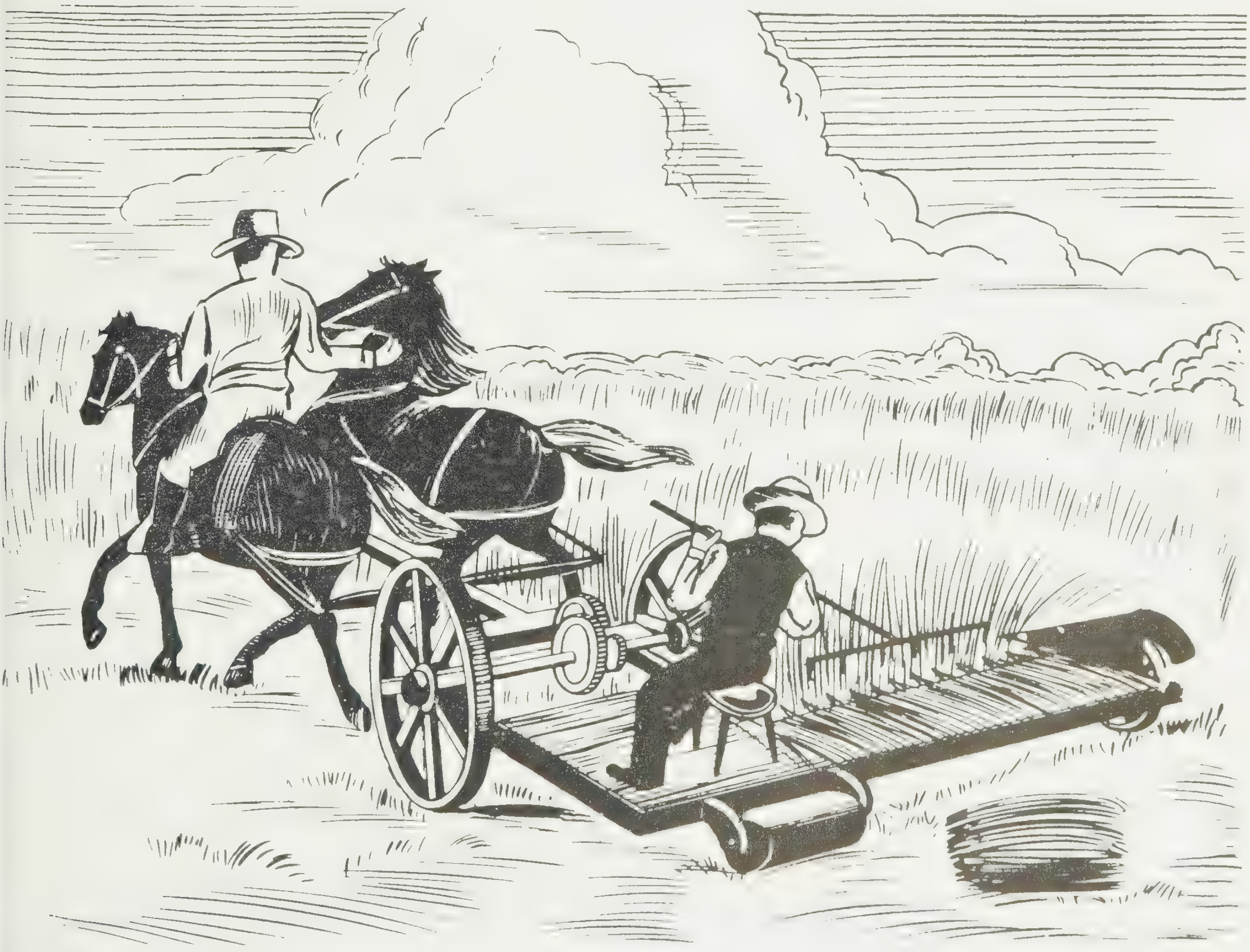
Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

MASSEY HARVESTER, 1878



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

PATRICK BELL'S REAPING MACHINE, 1826



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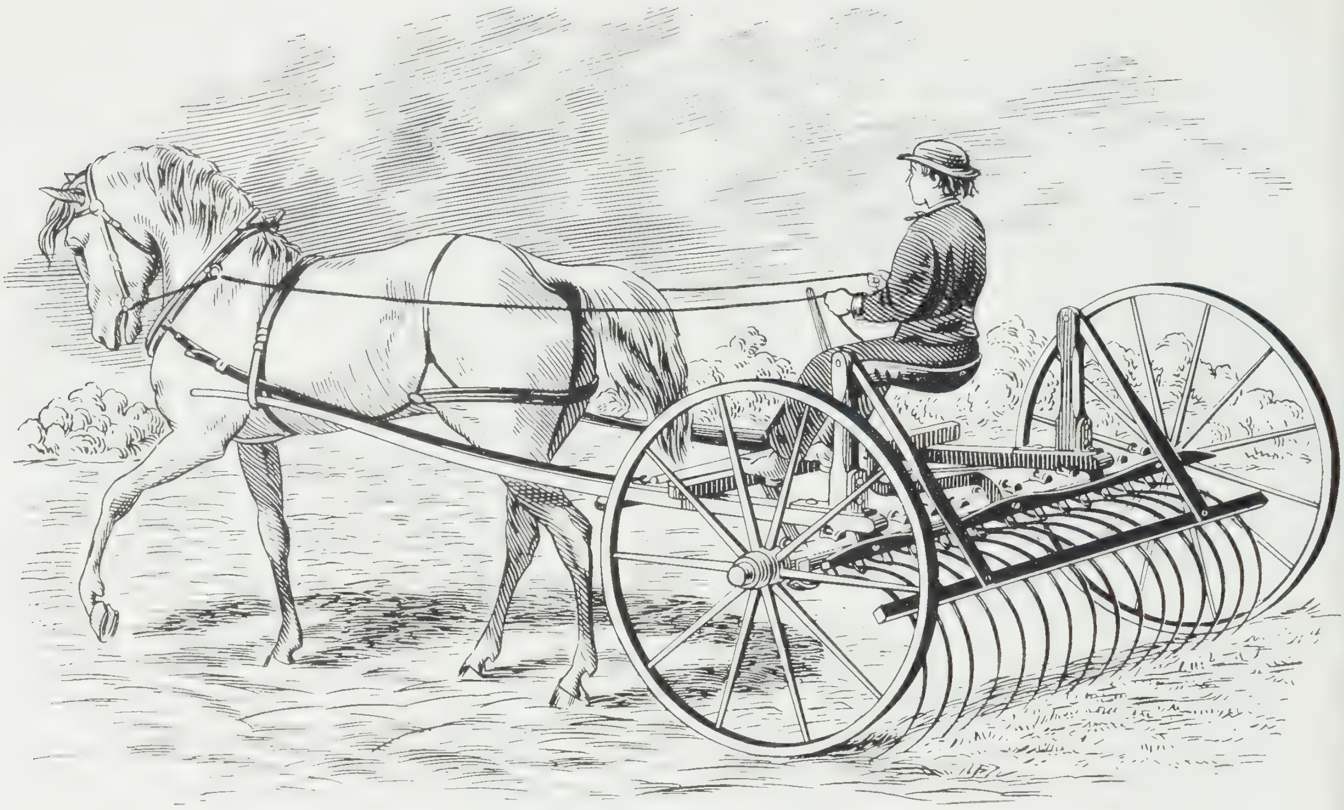
HUSSEY'S REAPING MACHINE, 1833



Massey Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

HORSE RAKE

Martin Snyder found that his initiative in importing it was rewarded only by its malicious destruction. Riddell says the horses operating the machine were driven tandem, with a man standing on the platform to throw off the sheaves. As the McKyes machine is said to have been the first in the province it is of value to locate exactly the farm where it was used—lot 22 of concession A in Hamilton Township.

In 1847 the first McCormick reapers were brought into the same township but were found too light. John Helm & Son, Cobourg foundrymen, consequently produced a competing machine, and it was awarded first prize at the Provincial Exhibition of 1848. Reels were added to the reapers, avoiding the making of sheaves; and then wire and twine were used to bind them.

Hand rakes were in universal use until 1840, but Riddell says that revolving wooden horse-rakes were introduced in that year. They were great labour-savers and were soon found everywhere, costing only $7 to $8 each, a price within the reach of almost all farmers.

> The American horse-rake [wrote Mrs. Edward Copleston in 1861] is a most useful, ingenious, and economic machine, . . . consisting of a frame some twelve feet in width mounted on wheels, with shafts; to this frame are attached twenty-four teeth, three feet or so

> in length, made of the hardest and toughest ash, strung upon an iron rod so as to rise over any obstruction and fall again immediately. The driver stands on the platform, and by the aid of a lever on which he merely plants his foot and leans his weight he raises the teeth off the ground, and they immediately drop the hay or grain whenever he does so. About eight acres can be gone over with this rake in about half a day.

This machine saved several men's labour, was easy on the horse, and left no litter in the fields; yet, though patented in Canada West, it was 'for some unaccountable reason' kept off the market. Its price when available was £4 sterling, complete with shafts and well-tired wheels. About the same time (1860) a competition for self-rakes was held in Dundas,* but they were not generally considered a success.

About 1850 mowing machines were being imported, John Wade of Hamilton Township obtaining one of the earliest from Buffalo, a Ketchum Mower costing about $100. Awkward, and hard on the horses, these reapers were speedily improved, one manufactured by Ball in Ohio being a favourite.

As early as 1832 small threshing machines were found in the province, hauled about by horses at harvest-time and replacing the 'six-horse buzzer' and other separators. Walter Riddell describes their operation as follows:

> When moved from one farm to another the power was first placed on two wheels, the thresher was placed on top of that again, and then the front wheels and reach of a wagon were connected with the wheels carrying the thresher, and the outfit was ready to move. The grain was threshed by the cylinder beating the heads against the bottom of the machine, and it is wonderful how well the work was done.

Grain and straw came out together, necessitating a great deal of shaking and winnowing afterwards, as well as plenty of barn space in which to work. One hundred bushels of grain was a good day's production. A *thrasher* in Dundas County in 1834 was a similar curiosity:

> It was one of the American 8 horse power thrashers, without any separator whatever. The whole power was expended in turning the cylinder of 2 feet diameter at an enormous velocity of 1500 revolutions in a minute (the maximum speed of the drum, 3 feet in diameter, of the best British mill is 400). It literally devoured the sheaves, required 10 to 12 hands to attend upon it, and left the barn in a woeful state of confusion. If kept on full speed for 10 hours it would thrash 500 bushels of wheat.

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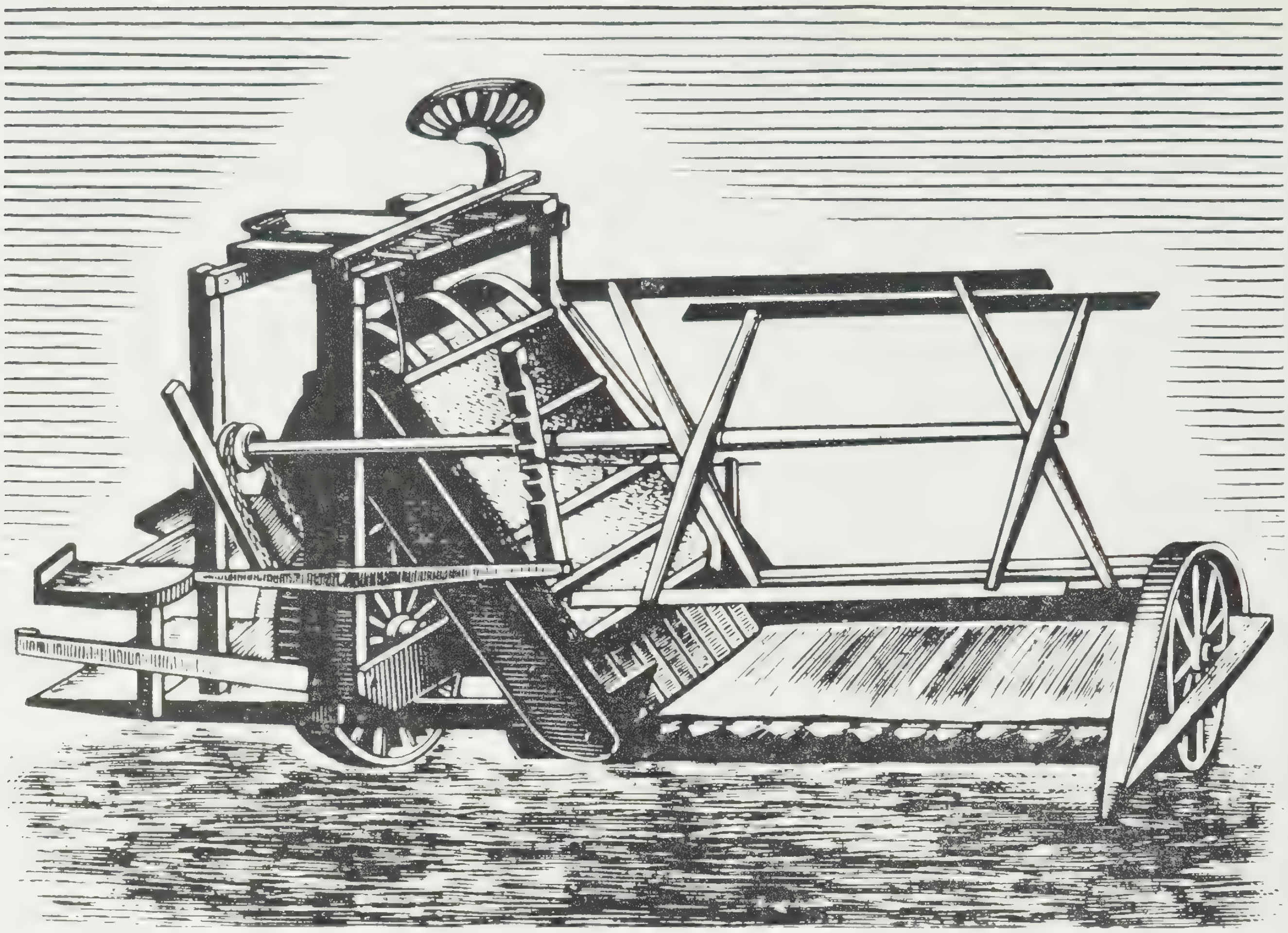
*This prominent pioneer town's founders are easily remembered, for they were the Hatts, the Heads, and the Hares!



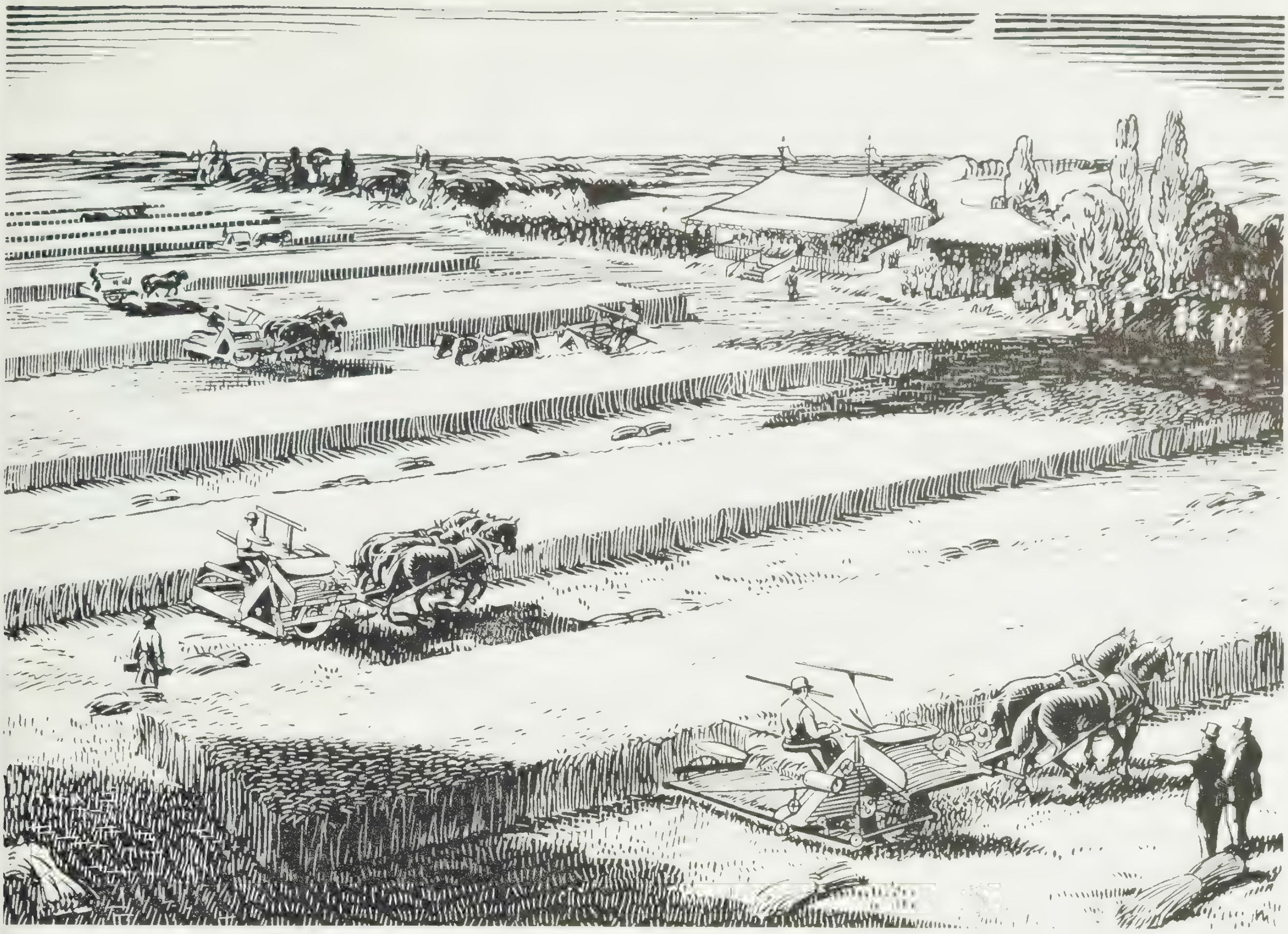
Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

MARSH HARVESTER

The prototype of all automatic binders, it was invented by Charles W. and William Marsh of Illinois. Their father, Robert Marsh, had been active in the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837 and had been transported to the prison colony of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). In 1847 he published in Buffalo *Seven Years of My Life, or Narrative of a Patriot Exile.*

International Nickel Ltd. Russell Taber

THE BLACKSMITH SHOP



Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

A GREAT BINDER FIELD TRIAL

Massey-Ferguson Ltd. T. W. Maclean

HARRIS BRANTFORD OPEN-END BINDER, 1890

In 1842 John Livingstone brought in a Pitt Separator, considered the 'last word', for it separated the grain from the straw. A few years later a straw-carrier or stacker was attached, and all later threshing-machines were really improved Pitts. Writing in 1861, Mrs. Copleston thought that the two-horse threshing machine was best adapted for a farm of moderate size where the object was home consumption or a gradual market, not immediate sale of the whole crop.

> This [she said] is worked by a horse-treadmill. Our horses had worked on it without receiving the slightest injury, and they mount the mill as readily as they would back into a waggon. The power thus obtained is sufficient to work a cylinder capable of threshing out from one hundred to one hundred and fifty bushels of oats per day. One man is wanted to feed the cylinder, another to untie the bundles of grain, and a boy to throw away the straw, which is separated from the chaff by means of a straw-carrier kept in motion by the same power that works the cylinder.

Comparisons with larger hired threshing outfits, she said, were all in favour of the smaller tread-machine, for there was a distinct saving in labour costs. When eight horses were used the farmer had to supply four, ten to fifteen hands were required, and as the machine's owner was paid according to the amount threshed he was in a hurry to clear out the barns at top speed; and as few barns had adequate storage space it was next to impossible to prevent mixture of grain if stored, or perhaps its marketing at an unfavourable time. The two-horse thresher cost about £35 sterling, would last at least eight or ten years, and pay for its cost in from two to three. The power used in threshing progressed from horses to windmill to steam and, more recently, to electricity and gasoline. David Beldam of Scarborough paid $1216 in 1879 for one of the early steam threshers made at Woodbridge.

For at least half a century machine introduction was often the occasion of celebration. This was particularly the case in mass deliveries,* as, for example, in 1854, when seventeen wagons, each with a reaper, passed in procession from Toronto to Scarborough. Even more notable was 'Delivery Day', when all the machines for a large district moved triumphantly along the road to the accompaniment of bands and prominent citizens, banquets and speeches. These were colourful days.

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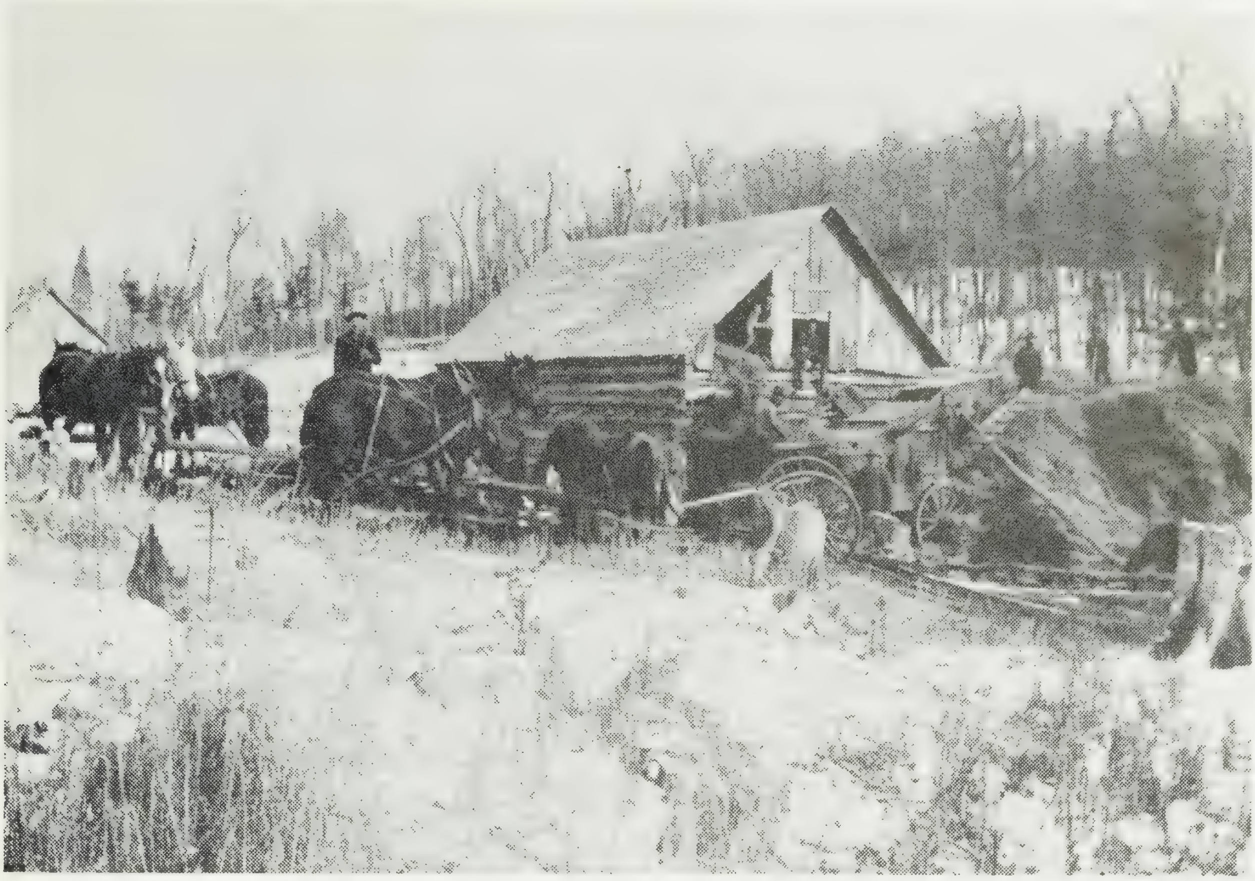
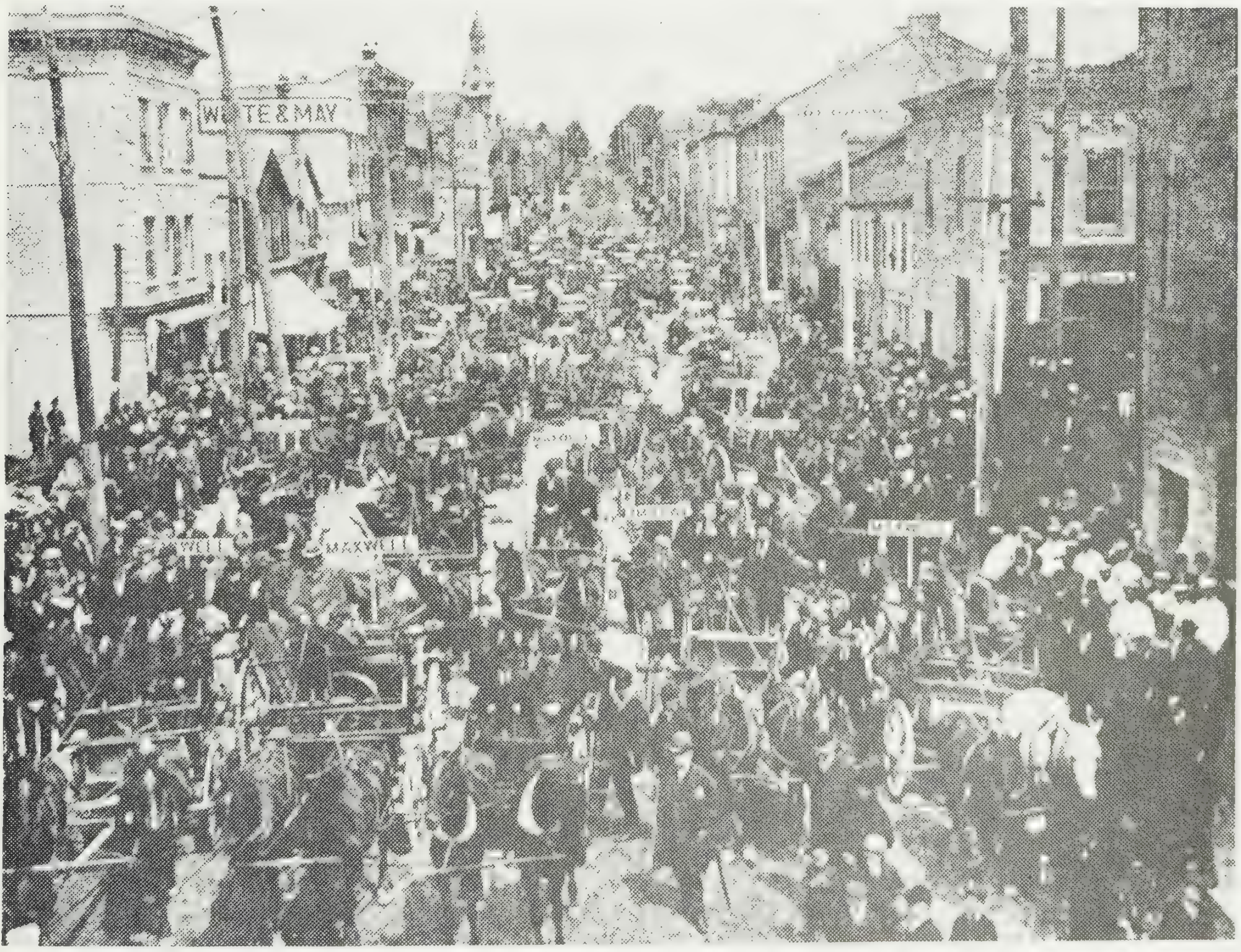
*In earlier times, due to difficulties of transport, machines were usually sent in parts with a mechanic, who assembled them on or near the farm of the purchaser.



Courtesy Charles H. Williamson

THRESHING BY HORSEPOWER, HALIBURTON



Toronto *Globe* Pictorial Supplement

MAXWELL DELIVERY DAY, ST. MARY'S, 1901

When all new machinery for a district assembled in colourful procession.

By the eighteen-seventies the average Ontario farmer might have one of a large variety of ploughs, but the rest of his equipment was more stereotyped. A wheel-cultivator with long shovel-shaped teeth was used to break up the ploughed furrows. A set of harrows levelled and pulverized the seed-bed. A hand-seeder or a horse-drawn one might be employed for seeding, the best of these having rubber tubes with steel points to conduct the grain from the box to the earth. A few iron rollers were in use, but more generally found was the 'pioneer roller' of logs with bolts at either end to serve as an axle. The 'Buckeye' Mower, with two small driving-wheels, cut the hay; and some farmers were able to afford a tedder. The hayrake had suspended teeth, with a gear to lift them and empty the hay. A hay-loader was a rarity at the time. If the barn was large a good deal of pitching was needed in storing the hay, for tracks and cars in barns were equally rare. Hay-pressing was still an unusual process, though some was done at railway stations to facilitate shipment.

Among reapers in the 'seventies the Marsh Harvester was prominent but none too satisfactory. Wire-binders were not nearly as good as twine-binders for sheaves, which came into use in 1880. Hired or 'custom' threshing was common because of the expensive nature of the machine, which was generally an improved Pitt, though there were other good threshers; they had a capacity of 300 to 500 bushels per day. Horse-power was usual, the owner of the thresher supplying two of the four teams of horses needed. A portable steam engine was first used near Cobourg in 1861, but the need to draw water for them and the possibility of fire (though many farmers were carrying fire insurance in the 'seventies) made them unpopular for a time. By 1880 the steam thresher was being generally accepted as more efficient than the old method. But the day of the gasoline tractor and electric power on farms was still far off.

CHAPTER IX

MAKING THINGS FOR THE HOME

(1) THE AGE OF WOOD*

THE Canadian pioneer lived in an age of wood. Many complicated machines and contrivances consisted entirely of wood, though wood may form no part of the machines which do their work in the industries of today. Similarly most of the equipment of the pioneer home was hand-made and of wood. When a door took the place of a blanket or some makeshift covering of the entrance to the log house, its hinges, lock, and latch were often of wood. In describing the experience of a settler in Ops Township in raising his log house in the wilderness, Thomas Conant wrote:

> To form a door he split some thin slabs from a straight-grained cedar and pinned them with wooden pins to cross slats. The most ingenious parts of the construction, however, were the hinges. Iron hinges he had not and could not get. With the auger he bored a hole through the end of a square piece of wood, and sharpening the other end with his axe, he then bored a hole into one of the logs of the house, constituting in part a door-jamb, and drove the piece of wood into this hole. This formed the top part of the hinge, and the bottom part was fashioned in exactly the same way. Now to the door in like manner he fastened two pegs of wood with holes bored through their ends. Placing the ends of the hinges above one another, they presented the four ends with holes leading through them, the one above the other. Next he made a long pin with his handy jack-knife, leaving a run at one end of it and making it long enough to reach from the top to the lower hinge. Through the holes at the end of the hinge this long pin was placed, and thus the door was hung.

Wooden pumps are still in common use in Ontario, though many farmers have now iron pumps with which water may be forced to various buildings. James B. Scott of Oakland Town-

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*This and subsequent sections on domestic manufactures were published in 1940 for the use of schools under the title *Pioneer Arts and Crafts*, but the material has been expanded for this volume.

John Ross Robertson Collection

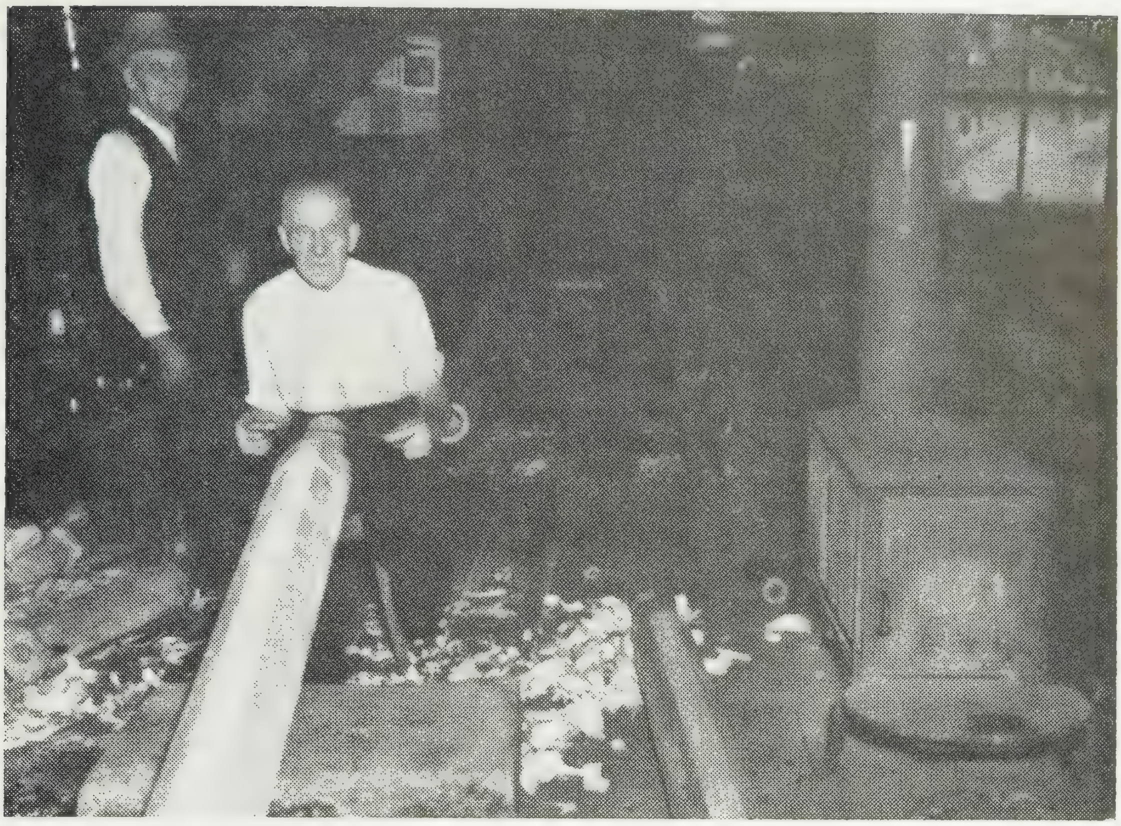
KITCHEN UTENSILS, 1813

Most of them were hand-made in the early period.

ship, Brant County, who had been making wooden pumps since 1883, used tamarack logs and bored them with a two-inch pod auger. The head of the pump was made of quarter-cut pine. A gasoline engine provided power for the boring, but until 1916 Mr. Scott used a horse to turn the wheel, and some of his early competitors even bored by hand. When he entered the trade there were numerous pump-makers in the district, but at the time of his death in 1941 Mr. Scott was the only one left within a radius of at least fifty miles.

(2) CUTTING BOARDS

Many a pioneer house was floored—if at all—with half logs roughly formed by adze or broad-axe, for smooth boards were available only at sawmills. Some settlers contrived to make boards sufficiently even for partitions by splitting logs known to break with a fairly smooth surface. At times a whip-saw was used, but it was laborious work to saw from end to end of a log, one man standing in a pit with the sawdust falling continually in his eyes as he attempted to keep up with the man above him. Samuel Strickland developed improved methods of *slabbing*, or splitting planks from pine logs. At one end of an eight-foot log he marked off planks four inches wide,



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

COLEBROOK PUMP FACTORY, NEAR NAPANEE

and then split them out with wedges, starting from the outside rather than from the centre. Later he improved his planks by the following process:

> I cut a square notch on the top of two large logs laid nearly the length of my plank apart from each other; I then placed one edge of the plank in the notches, which I wedged firmly. By this method, after lining the upper edge, I was enabled to hew the surface of the plank with my broad axe and reduce it to the proper thickness. As soon as the surface was smoothed I struck a straight line on each side of the plank, which I dressed with my axe, thereby forming a square straight edge easily jointed with the plane. In this manner did I prepare my flooring and partitions, which for a time answered a very good purpose, as roof-battens for shingle on narrow cedar boards are easily split. Those I made were six feet long, and varied from four to eight inches in width and an inch thick. A board of this length reaches across three rafters. (The white cedar splits very freely.) I boarded both ends of my house with planks made in this manner.

Sawmills were at first as scarce as grist-mills. By 1792, however, there were thirteen between the mouth of the Trent River and Long Point, though all of them were in the Niagara district, which at that time contained almost all of the settlers in central Upper Canada. As the years passed, the sawmill was often the nucleus of settlements. Thomas Need, whose sawmill was the beginning of the village of Bobcaygeon, says that 'the erection of a sawmill is always the first marked event in the formation of a settlement in the Bush. . . . This induces many to come into the neighbourhood, from the facility it offers for building.' So the old methods of making planks gave way to machinery, and when a farmer took logs to the mill he usually received back half the boards, the other half being retained by the miller as payment.

(3) SPLITTING SHINGLES

Before the use of shingles, hollowed basswood logs or strips of bark commonly formed the roof of the pioneer's log house. The first shingles were about three feet long, and were split with considerable difficulty from blocks of cedar or pine, or occasionally from ash or oak. The frow or the axe was used for the purpose, and the shingles were heavy, usually uneven, and not shaved, serving as sheeting as well as shingles.

Pole rafters of split cedar, four inches wide, were laid a foot or so apart lengthwise across the rafters, and to these the shingles were fastened by wooden pins, each row overlapping the previous one. Barn shingles were often four feet long and placed on round rafters in constructing the roofs of the large cedar-log barns which may still be seen in various parts of Ontario. When eighteen-inch shingles came to be used, they were often nailed to strips of lath laid a few inches apart across the rafters, in place of sheeting, for this allowed circulation of air and kept the shingles dry underneath, delaying the process of rotting.

Experienced settlers quickly learned to pick sections of trees which would split fairly, for the appearance of outside knots, of the grain, and even of the limbs aided in the choice. The most suitable blocks would snap apart easily when split, without deep curves which would make holes in the shingles. About four shingles to an inch was usual, and a good splitter could keep two men busy shaving or dressing, which was best done with a draw-knife. Shingles were commonly packed in bundles of one thousand in a packing-frame.

Many of the most enterprising farmers constructed a shaving-horse, which was a combination of work-bench and vice. It was usually higher at one end than the other, and the worker sat astride the lower and narrower end, while through an opening in the bench in front of him projected the head of a clutch swinging on a pin which passed from one side to the other through the body of the bench or horse. Upon a transverse piece of wood on the lower end of the clutch, the operator placed his feet, and by pressing it from him he brought the head of the clutch down upon any object placed under it, and so held it firmly upon the horse. A draw-knife with handles at both ends was used to shave or cut the wood held in the shaving-horse, and it was particularly valuable in shaving and dressing shingles after they were split. Laths were similarly prepared.

(4) MAKING FURNITURE

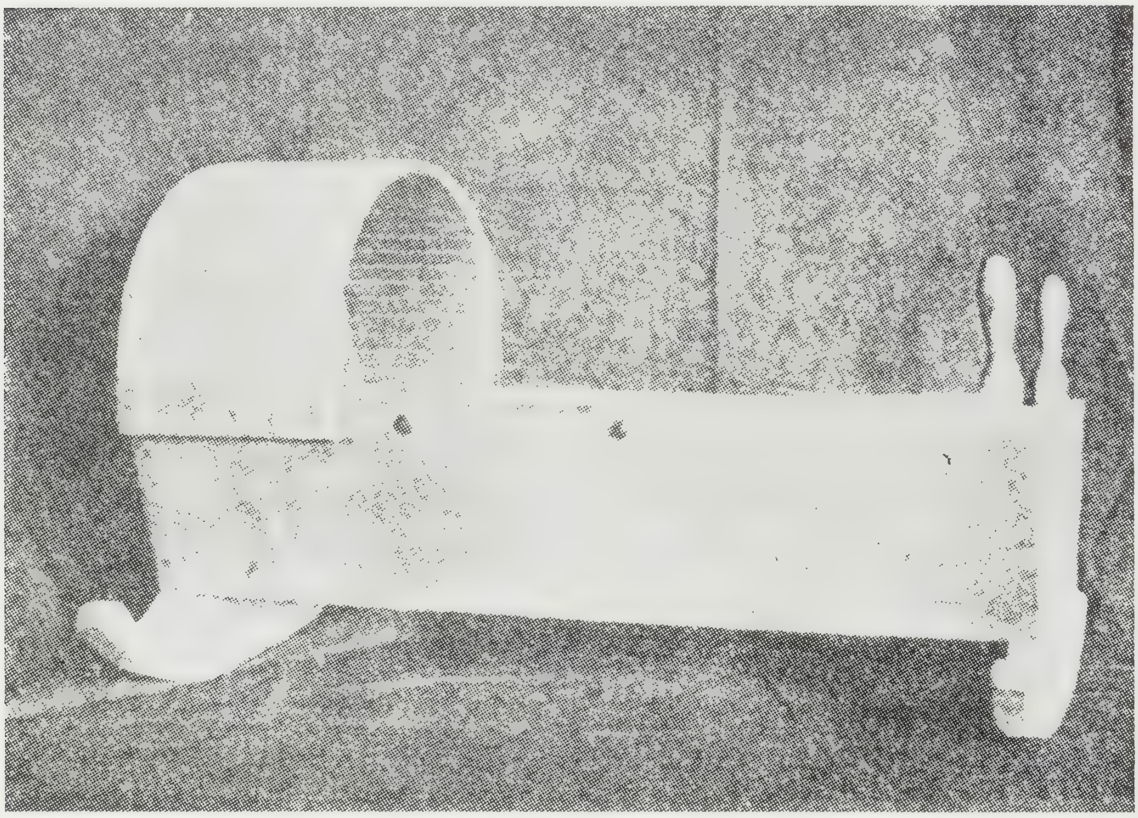
For the first few years the furnishings of a log shanty were usually no more elaborate than the house itself. A traveller observed that they consisted of 'a bedstead, roughly hewn out with a felling-axe, the sides, posts, and ends held together in screeching trepidation by strips of basswood bark; a bed of fine field-feathers; a table that might be taken for a victualler's chopping-block; four or five benches of the same rude mechanism; and the indispensable apparatus for cooking and eating.'

Early bedsteads were often built into a corner by fitting small six-foot poles into holes bored in the log wall. The outer ends of these poles fitted into a crosspiece, one end of which was inserted in the wall, and an upright used to support the other. The poles were small enough to give considerable spring to the bed. Samuel Strickland describes as 'the only article of luxury in my possession', a bed made of ironwood poles and plaited elm bark. A more advanced type of bedstead was the *catamount*, made of four posts and four poles. The sides were longer than the ends, and a mattress of woven elm bark or of hemlock boughs was later replaced by a straw tick. Some settlers made a rope bed consisting of cords twisted very tight; when the ropes sagged, a special type of wrench was used to tighten them. Another type of 'spring' consisted of basswood bark woven across the bedstead.

The first mattresses were made of materials ready at hand. Spruce boughs formed the most primitive, while dried beech leaves, moss, and straw were used when the bed-tick was filled. Most early mattresses had a large opening in the upper centre to enable easy adjustment of the stuffing. A feather tick—

considered a great luxury—was sometimes placed on top if the farmer had poultry. The more primitive beds were none too comfortable. 'The old cord bed-frame,' says an early settler, 'was a veritable trough, and the only thing that made the squeaking old thing endurable was a plethoric straw tick.' Buffalo or bear skins sometimes provided the only bedclothes.

A child's trundle bed was a sort of bunk on wheels, which could be pushed out of the way under the parents' bed. Sap-trough cradles were commonly used for infants, but there were other types woven of peeled hickory bark, withes, and rushes. Rope handles were frequently found on children's beds, and some cradles had elaborate hoods, handles at the foot for rocking, and knobs to which to tie covers. A curious rocking-chair cradle was constructed by William Hunter of Cavan Township so that his wife might sew and rock her baby at the same time. It was made of basswood, the seat of the chair and the base of the cradle being in one piece fifty-one inches long and two inches thick and supported by a rocker at each end. It was still in use over a century later.



Niagara Historical Society

HAND-MADE CRADLE

The handles were for rocking, and the knobs for securing the covers.

Sections of tree trunks provided stools until chairs or benches could be made. At first wooden pins held logs and slabs together. Sometimes the bench was convertible into a bunk, and had also a hinged lid which enabled the storage of the bedding. As the years passed, the more handy settlers built chairs for the home. An early type was strongly made of pine, with square legs tapering towards the floor. Frequently the seats were of split elm or willow bark. Men skilled in the work gradually developed the trade of chairmaker to the community.

Mrs. Catharine Traill wisely observed that elaborate and showy furniture—even if there were money to buy it—was out of place in a log house. She had in her home a barrel-chair, and gives the following details of its construction:

> The first four or five staves of a good, sound, clean flour barrel are to be sawn off level, within two feet of the ground—or higher if you think that will be too low for the seat: this is for the front; leave two staves on either side a few inches higher for the elbows; the staves that remain are left to form the hollow back; auger holes are next made all round on a level with the seat, in all the staves; through these holes ropes are passed and interlaced so as to form a secure seat: a bit of thin board may then be nailed flat on the rough edge of the elbow staves, and a coarse covering of linen or sacking tacked on over the back and arms; this is stuffed with cotton-wool, soft hay, or sheep's wool, and then a chintz cover over the whole and well-fitting cushion for the seat completes the chair.

Sofas or couches of pine,* stuffed with wool, were also made by handy settlers during their spare time in winter. The first rough table of boards often gave way to fine drop-leaf tables of walnut or cherry, while hardwood pegs driven into the wall or ceiling, to hold various implements and stores, were eventually replaced by cupboards and chests of various types. One settler at Erindale had three very handy sons who were skilful at the lathe and had brought a box of tools with them from the Old Land.

> In a very short time [we are told] they made all the wooden furniture of his new frame house—sofas, and tables of every kind, from a lady's work table (with roped pillars of black walnut) to the kitchen table; chimney pieces, painted, polished, and varnished; bedsteads, carts, waggons, and wheel-barrows—they were also equally expert at smith's work and shod their own horses.

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*Though furniture of walnut, butternut, cherry, and bird's-eye and other types of maple retains its popularity, pine has come to be considered the most characteristic Canadian wood, and arrow-back chairs, tables, and cupboards of pine are in great demand among the increasing number of Canadians who are furnishing parts of their homes with the best native antiques.

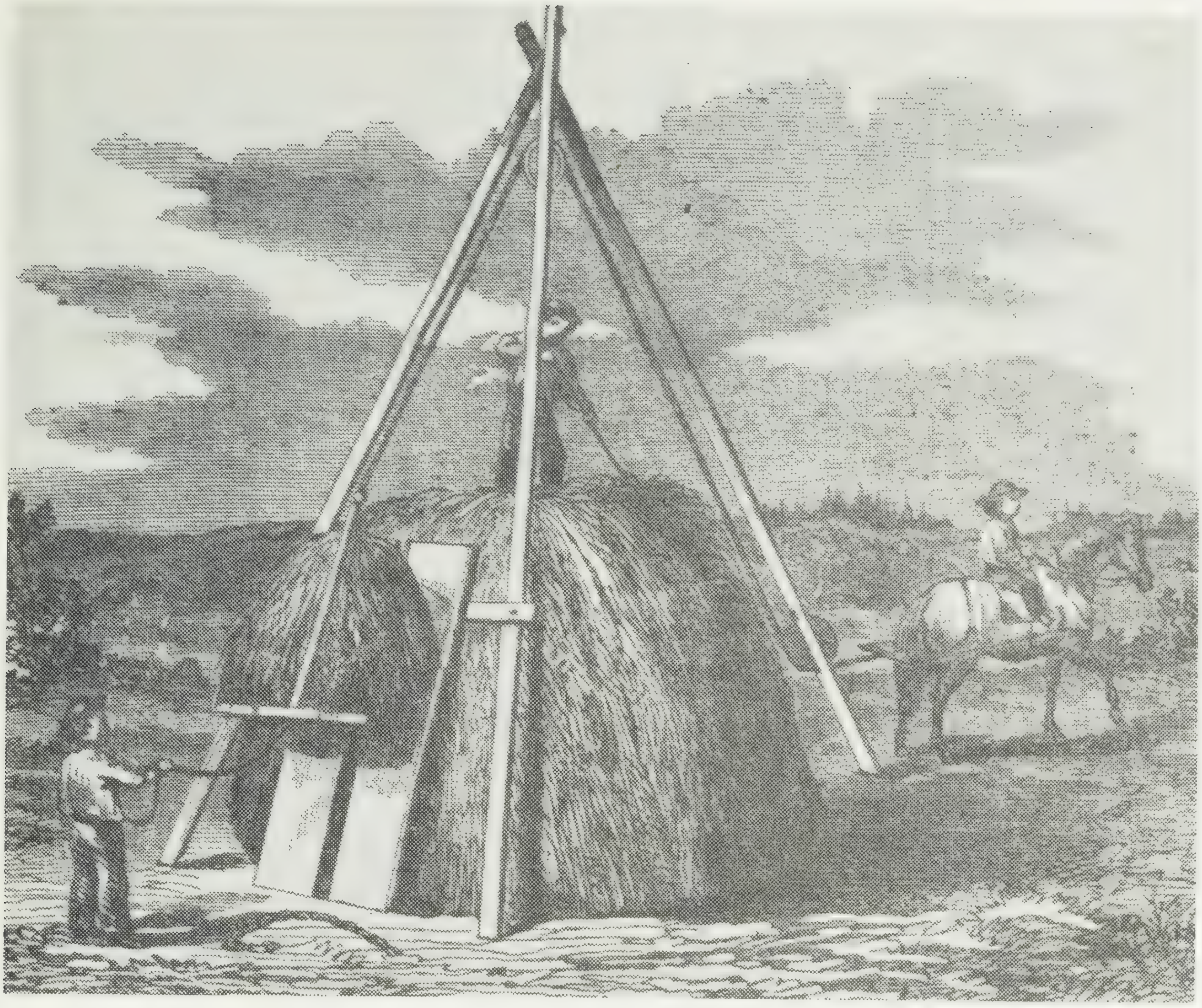
(5) MAKING VEHICLES, IMPLEMENTS, AND TOOLS

Most of the earliest settlers made their own wagons, sleighs, and farm implements. Wheels for carts were sometimes entirely of wood, for there was no iron with which to bind them. In place of a plough, a drag, consisting of a crotched stick with wooden teeth, served the purpose. Crude hand-made hoes and forks were usual, and wooden yokes to fit the shoulder. Some pioneer farmers made their own cradles for reaping, forming the snath by bending it around a tree. The flail for threshing was also home-made. As it was made of two pieces, the shock as it pounded the sheaves was more readily absorbed, and the worker was able to hit the wheat with the full length. Sometimes a fan replaced it. This was an instrument made of ash boards in the shape of a semi-circle of two feet radius. A rim of about six inches was bent around it, and there were holes at either side for handles. It looked like a large grain scoop, and when grain was shaken in it, the chaff blew away. If there was no wind for winnowing, two men waved a sheet up and down.

Another type of separator called a riddle—usually a screen woven from horsehair—was made to sift meal. In fact there was hardly a need which could not be satisfactorily—if crudely—met by the handy pioneer. Even a wooden velocipede was built in the village of Omemee. There were no springs in it, and its handles, pedals, hubs, spokes, and wheel rim were of wood, only the tires being of iron. It must have been rough riding on such a vehicle over the mud and gravel roads of the day!

Soon every village had a wagon-maker, and the larger firms made a variety of buggies, 'pleasure wagons', and carriages for town and country use. Men skilled in making agricultural implements, like Hart Massey of Newcastle, gradually developed large manufactories, which served an ever-increasing territory.

A great variety of tubs, firkins, buckets, and churns were home-made before tradesmen in the towns specialized in their manufacture. Utensils, such as ladles, rolling-pins, and potato-mashers, were often made at home. A gourd, dried and hollowed out, provided a satisfactory dipper. The early Loyalists used spoons and dishes roughly cut from basswood, and when peddlers came around with pewter spoons, a few settlers obtained pewter and moulds and imitated them. In some settlements thorn spikes were gathered as a substitute for pins,



Canada Farmer, 1864

STACKING HAY BY HORSE POWER

One of numerous agricultural inventions found to be impractical.

EARLY COOPER SHOP, VANESSA

which sometimes cost half a dollar a paper. Many a settler had a workshop and forge at the end of the barn, and there, with such carpenter's tools as he possessed, he made axe-handles, whiffle-trees, ox-yokes, a wheel-barrow, and various pails, bowls, and utensils. The first washing-machine was not a complicated utensil, for it was merely a 'pounding barrel', not unlike a churn. A large wooden pounder and soft soap removed the dirt from the clothes. There was also the 'battle board', upon which the washer battled with the clothes by using a stick flattened at one end; and there were ingenious and effective wringers constructed by the more skilful.

Sand and lye were frequently used in pioneer homes to clean the floor, benches, and tables. The first brooms were primitive, for cedar or hemlock boughs tied to a handle provided both broom and brush. The splint broom was made from a stick of green hickory, birch, or blue beech, which was splintered fine with a knife, as deep as desired; then the upper end was shaped as a handle. The finished broom was usually about five feet long and four inches in diameter. A home-made corn broom was the next development. Scottish settlers in Scarborough Township imported plants of Scotch broom, though the brooms were, in this instance, designed mainly for use in their favourite winter sport, curling.

Mrs. Traill describes the heroic efforts of a widow and her children as an example of enterprise and perseverance amid misfortune. The father had been killed by a falling tree, leaving six children under fifteen years of age, but in addition to planting wheat, corn, and potatoes and looking after their cattle, they chopped and underbrushed several acres of new land and erected a brush fence around their crops. The boys were handy with tools, and spent their spare time shaping axe-handles and hickory whip-handles, which they sold to the nearest merchant; and they made brooms of ironwood, blue beech, or oak for neighbouring farmers, while the mother knitted socks and made slippers of listing. The family also made maple sugar and syrup, and the boys obtained groceries and clothing in exchange for loads of oak and hemlock bark, which was in demand for tanning. Soon this enterprising family was able to pay further instalments on the farm which their father had bought just before his death.

CHAPTER X

LEATHER WORK

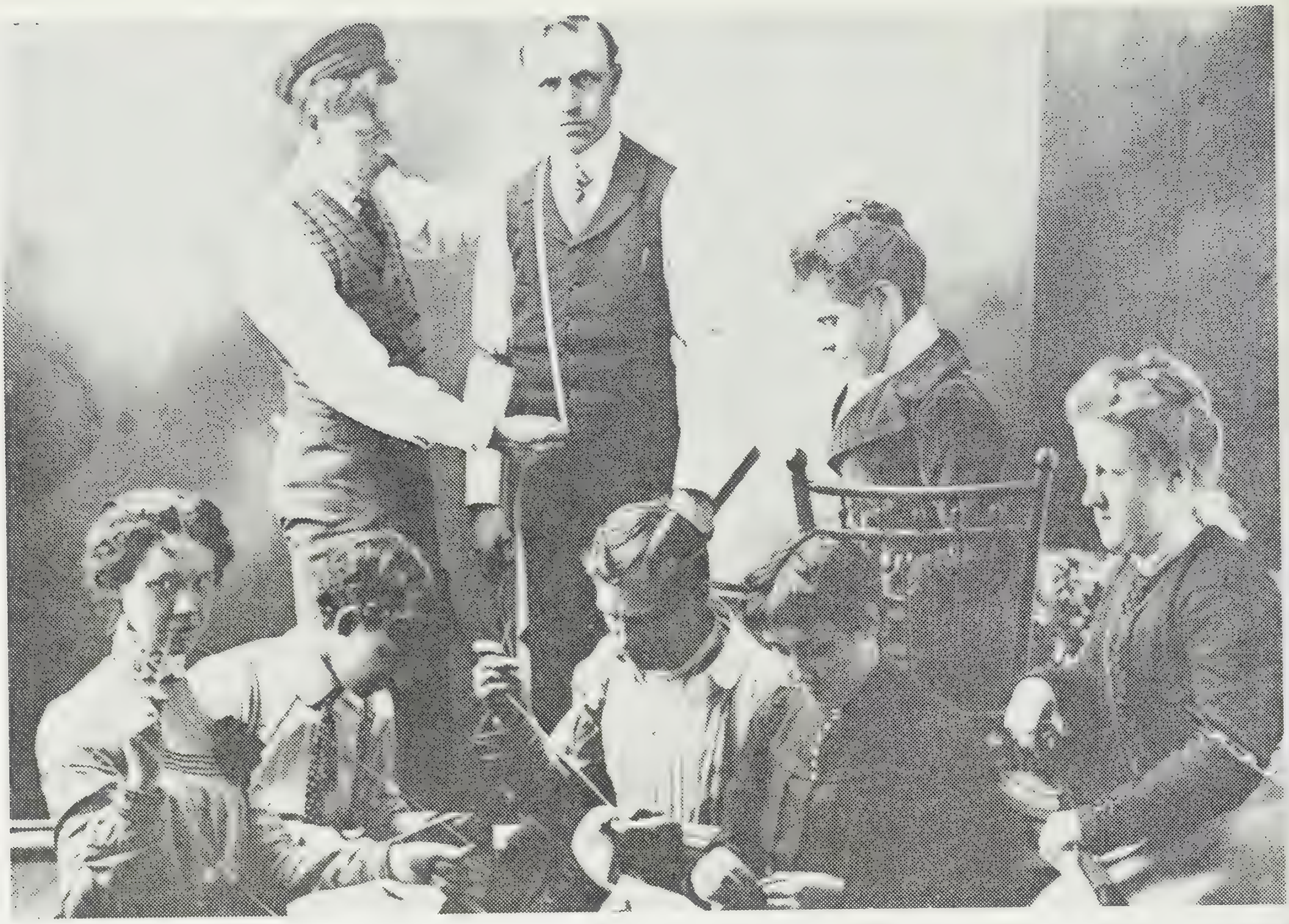
(1) CLOTHES OF HIDES AND SKINS

THE reminiscences of Loyalist settlers suggest that the use of skins to make clothing was widespread. While this appears to be somewhat exaggerated, there is no doubt that they were frequently used when other clothing was scarce. Buckskin breeches and jackets, skirts and petticoats, gloves and mittens, and coonskin caps and bonnets were sometimes an important part of the family wardrobe. There were deerskin saddles and bed-covers, and buckskin moccasins provided the first footwear. Sometimes the skins were well tanned into leather, and such useful articles as thread and drinking vessels made from them. One settler says that he wore a pair of leather trousers for twelve years and then sold them for $2.50, for they were still in good condition.

(2) TANNING LEATHER

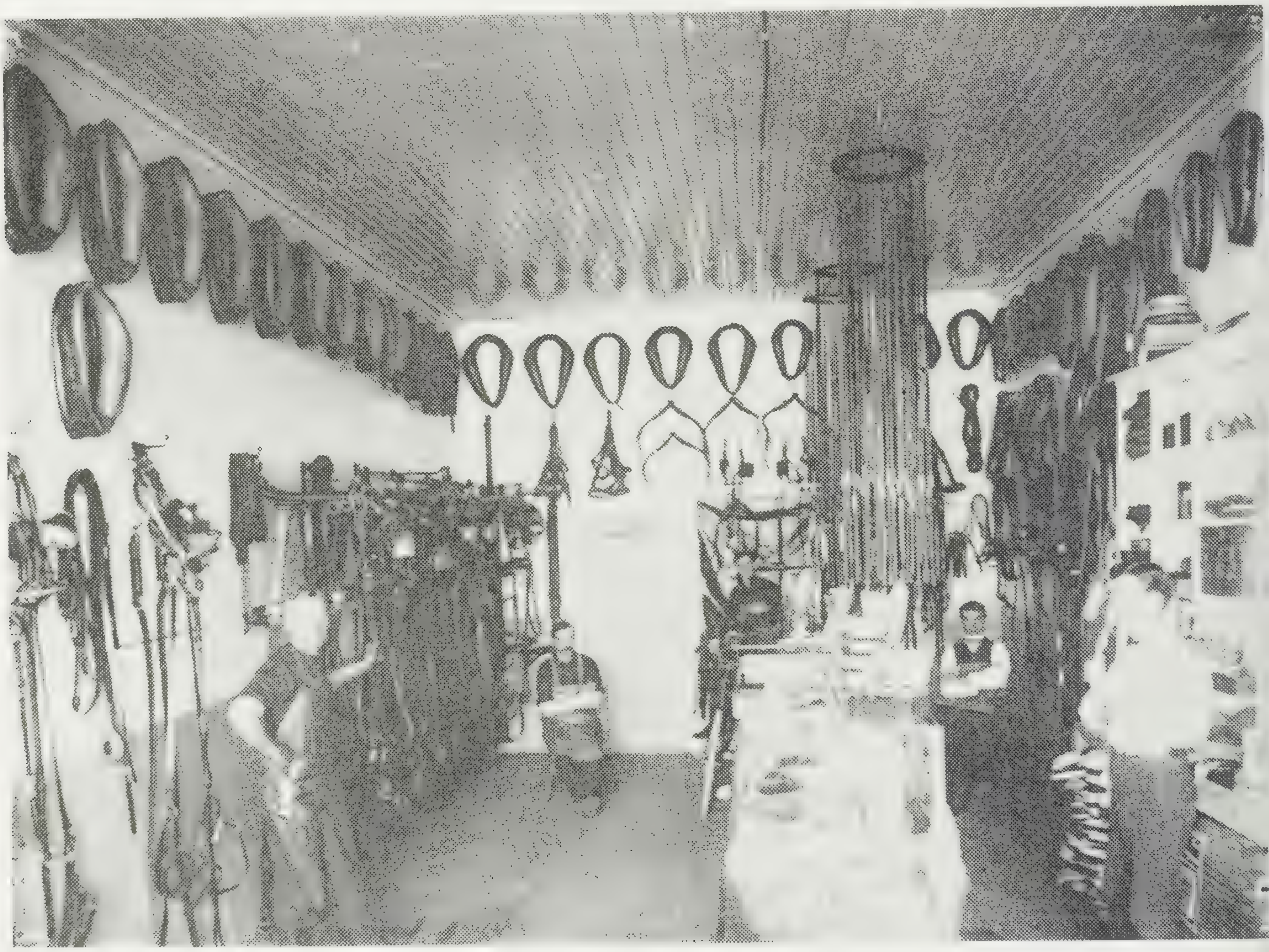
The skins of animals have been tanned since the dawn of civilization. Drying the skins was found of value in delaying decomposition, but some other means of preservation was needed, and the discovery that the bark of most trees was effective for the purpose was probably made by accident. The tannic acid in the bark combines with the gelatine, which is the chief element in hides, to tan them into leather. Oak bark was long considered the best for the purpose.

The American Indian tanned skins after this fashion. He took the ashes from his campfire, put water on them, and soaked the skins in the solution. In a few weeks the hair and bits of flesh came off, leaving the raw hide. By working the hide with his hands and rubbing it with sticks he made it soft and pliable. The brains of certain animals were sometimes rubbed into it for the same purpose. The tanning, in a solution



Courtesy Mrs. D. Clark

TAILOR F. R. DAVIS AND STAFF, LITTLE CURRENT, 1890's



Courtesy Mrs. George Irwin

JAMES FISHER'S HARNESS SHOP, GORE BAY, 1890's of hemlock and oak bark, took about three months, and the leather was again worked by hand.

The pioneer settler followed the Indian method with some variations. The hair was removed by soaking the hides in water to soften them, and they were then laid in piles in a heated room for a time, when the hair would become loose. Usually the hair was merely scraped off, but milk of lime was sometimes used as an aid.

The hides were then placed in a tan-pit, alternated with strips of oak, hemlock, or alder bark. The pit was filled with water, and the process of tanning allowed to continue for several months, after which they were rubbed with bear-oil or tallow to make them soft and pliable. Besides the use of leather for harness and boots, leathern aprons were commonly worn by tradesmen at their work, and farmers found many purposes which it served.*

Most settlements had tanneries, which were usually built near waterfalls so that there would be power to grind hemlock bark. In 1804 Philemon Wright began to tan leather on a large scale at Wright's Mills (Hull), obtaining a cylinder from New York to grind the bark. The Lowell Tannery, on North Yonge Street near Newtonbrook, was early prominent, but as a modern tanning establishment it uses many new methods. The chrome or chemical process is now employed for light leathers. The hides are stored in refrigerated warehouses and preserved by salt until used. The salt is then removed by soaking, lime and sodium sulphite loosens the hairs, and the hides are thoroughly scraped and cleaned in a chemical solution. Several baths tan the leather, and oil emulsions give softness and pliability. There are numerous finishing processes of graining, glazing, and colouring. Altogether, the industry is carried on in a manner almost entirely different from that of pioneer days.

(3) MAKING SHOES AND HARNESS

Many of the earliest settlers crudely cut and sewed or pegged the boots for their family. German and Dutch immigrants

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*Many settlers from the Old Land were skilled in the tanning and shoemaking processes. James Boswell noted in 1773 that in the Isle of Coll, Scotland, 'Every man can tan. They get oak and birch bark and lime from the mainland. Some have pits, but they commonly use tubs. I saw brogues very well tanned, and every man can make them.' (*Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*)

sometimes wore wooden clogs upon arrival in Canada, but soon learned that they were unsuitable for conditions here; while the Englishman found that pegs were often used in America because thread rotted so quickly amid the swamps and mud of settlement. Sometimes a man who was particularly skilful at the work would become an itinerant shoemaker,* travelling from house to house to make a year's supply of shoes for the family. He carried his own kit of tools, consisting of a hammer, a knife, a heavy needle, awls for punching holes, heavy nails, thread, and a rough wooden last around which to shape the shoe. A small tub of water stood near by to soak and soften the leather which the farmer had prepared for the shoemaker's use. As he pounded and sewed, a strap around his foot and the shoe held it firmly in position, allowing him full use of his hands. The shoemaker usually boarded with the family.

From *Pioneer Days* Creigh Collins

MAKING SHOES

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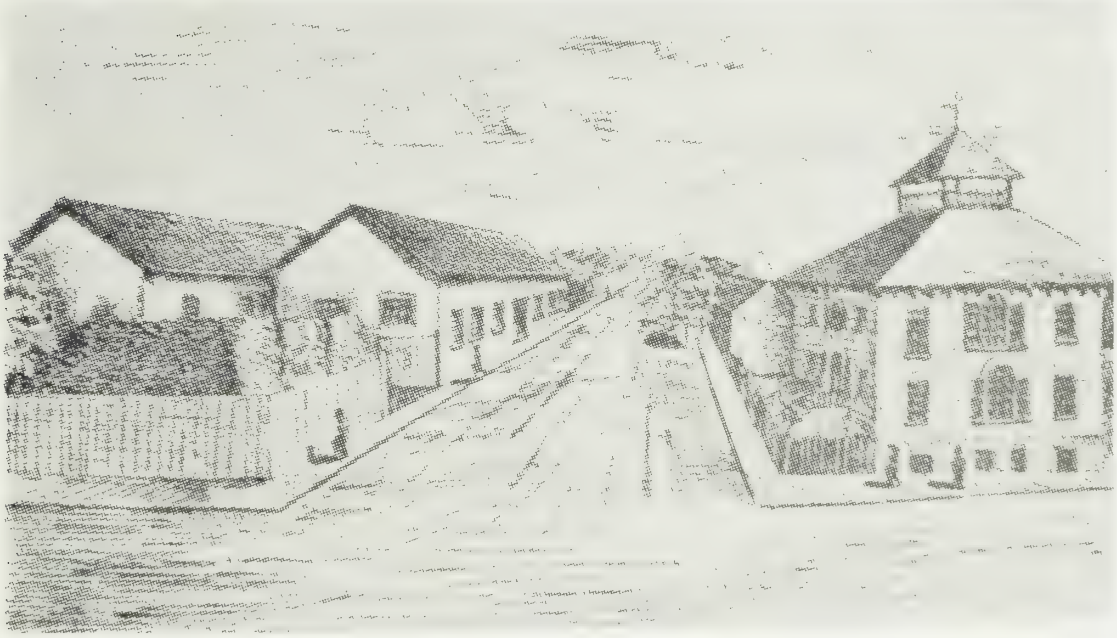
*At the middle of the century William Matheson, who lived in Stephen Township, Huron County, travelled on foot in that region repairing watches and clocks. Cash was scarce, but settlers paid if and when they could. Sometimes, if logging or harvesting were in progress, he would stop a few days and lend a hand. Later Matheson set up a shop in Lucan, Biddulph Township, adding photography to his other skills.

Harper's Weekly, 1870 John Boiles

THE TRAVELLING TINKER
Itinerant tradesmen were characteristic of the pioneer period.



KETCHUM'S TANNERY, YONGE AND ADELAIDE STREETS, TORONTO, 1834
At the left are the currying shed, bark mills and piles of tan bark; and at the right Jesse Ketchum's office and home.

James Treasure wrote home from Yarmouth Township, Upper Canada, in 1830, telling of his success as a shoemaker:

> I have a great deal more than I can do now, and they tell me it will come in faster after harvest; but there is no possibility of getting hands. I have 13s. 6d. for making a pair of Wellington boots, the leather being found me. . . .The price for making men's and women's shoes is both alike, 4s. 6d. for light and 3s. 6d. for strong. They find [*i.e.,* provide] their own thread, too. I can now save money very fast, and shall soon be able to buy my own leather, which will be more profitable.

With the growth of settlements the shoemaker lived in the village, and there was also a hatter, a saddler, and probably a harness-maker. Frequently the currier had a separate shop where he brushed, scraped, and rolled the leather, making it soft and pliable. It was then passed on to the saddler, who did his work on a sewing-horse, or to the harness-maker, who cut and stitched it much like the shoemaker. Eventually the currier's work was carried on by the equipment in the tannery, and in modern times large factories have been built, doing by machine the work formerly done by small tradesmen.

CHAPTER XI

SPINNING AND WEAVING INDUSTRIES

(1) SHEARING AND SORTING WOOL

SHEEP were not raised in the pioneer period without great difficulty. Wolves were common in many districts, and winter feed was sometimes little but pine boughs; but if the sheep survived the cold winter they usually had a fine thick fleece. Most of the work connected with the wool industry fell to the lot of the women. When sheep-shearing time came in the late spring the sheep were carefully washed in a nearby creek. Sometimes it was necessary to apply a solution of tobacco leaves to destroy vermin. After a couple of days the sheep were thoroughly dry and the shearing began, hand shears being used. Joseph Pickering wrote as follows concerning a sheep-shearing in early June:

> Sheared the sheep today; the Canadians shear the belly and neck, and then tie the sheep's legs and shear along them, or rather any or every way, and are not nice about their appearance when finished. One Canadian sheared near fifty.

Shearing was followed by picking and sorting, when all matted, coarse, and dirty wool was removed from the clean, later to be spun into coarse yarn for rough purposes only. A 'picking bee' was often called, when the neighbours gathered for the work. It was a jolly occasion, for a bee always included gossip, singing, and dancing.

(2) GREASING AND CARDING

To aid in combing, the wool was carefully greased. Lard, oil, or refuse butter was used, being melted and poured or sprinkled over the wool. By stirring and rubbing the wool with the hands, using three pounds of grease to seven or eight of wool, the workers distributed it evenly throughout. Whipping with a rod was another method of working the grease evenly into the wool, which was then rolled up in blankets, ready for carding.

The carding process consisted of combing the wool into rolls by the use of carding-boards, one with the teeth upward and the other down, which were drawn back and forth until all the fibres were brushed straight. The wool was then twisted or rolled into a soft ball or *roving*, ready for spinning. Even in the eighteen-thirties most districts had at least one carding mill, where for 2d. to 3d. a pound the work was satisfactorily done, and farmers received their wool back to spin into yarn.

(3) SPINNING

The wheel used in spinning woollen yarn was a large one, so the operator stood as she worked. The wool was placed on the point of the spindle, and the wheel worked with the right hand, perhaps aided by a small forked stick, while the left held the spindle. As the wheel whirled around, the operator walked three steps back and forward, and the wool twisted and the yarn wound on the spindle. In a day she might walk twenty miles while spinning half a dozen skeins of yarn.

> I like the hum of the spinning-wheel amazingly [remarks an early traveller], and have often waited to look at some tidy girl walking backwards and forwards at her task, at each approach sending off another hum as she drives the wheel round once more.

Yarn for knitting was spun only once, but for heavy cloth it was usually spun twice. The reel was used to wind the yarn into skeins, and one of the daughters of the house was often engaged at the reel while her mother worked the spinning-wheel. Each time a knot was wound on, the machine clicked when an upright slat was released and struck a nail. Fourteen knots made a skein, and four skeins of wool was a good day's work at the reel. Sometimes a machine called the swift was employed to unwind the skeins when the yarn was being wound into balls, but the yarn was usually hung up for a time in skeins.

Preparing wool and spinning provided work for the whole family. Handy boys frequently made the loom and reel spools with their jackknives, and they usually aided also in the hard work of washing the yarn and removing every particle of grease.

In some parts of Ontario spinning-wheels are still used, but carding mills where the wool is prepared are now few and inaccessible, and wheels and reels, if they have survived at all, have become curiosities stored away in the loft over the old driving-shed.

(4) DYEING

Dyeing originated in countries of the East, but the Canadian pioneer added many distinctive dyes to those of ancient times.* The process sometimes took place after the weaving, but it was usually more satisfactory to dye the yarn. The common 'sheep's-grey' flannel and fulled cloth worn by the men was made without dyes, by mixing one part of the wool of the black sheep with three of the wool of the white, or other proportions as desired.

Before attempting to dye yarn all grease and oil had to be removed from it by scouring in hot soap-suds. The soap, too, must all be rinsed out in soft water if the colour was to be equally distributed. Iron vessels were employed for most dark colours, but brass or tin for light and delicate tints.

Dyes were usually home-made. White maple bark, boiled and set with alum, gave a good brown-grey. A slate-coloured dye for cottons was produced by soaking in sumach-bark liquor, and then in warm water in which a little green copperas had been dissolved; a weak logwood dye with a little pearl ash gave a bluish tinge, while Brazil wood made it lavender.

Purslain weed and logwood, set with alum, gave a bright blue dye, but indigo plants were usually grown for the purpose. Madder provided red, and waxwood, onion skins, horse-radish leaves, smartweed, and goldenrod flowers were used for yellow. Sumach blossoms, walnut husks, and certain barks like butternut were employed to produce brown dye, the inner bark of the butternut being steeped in cold water for several days, and yarn or cloth soaked in the strained liquor.

Beech bark provided a drab colour, while green was produced by steeping in yellow dye and then in blue, and there were various other combinations according to the desire and skill of the dyer. The lye of wood ashes, with a little copperas dissolved in it, made an orange dye. Logwood chips steeped in

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*Many Scottish immigrants were accustomed to dyeing and cloth work. James Boswell observed in 1773 that the inhabitants of the Isle of Coll 'can all dye. They use heath for yellow; and for red, a moss which grows on stones. They make broadcloth, and tartan and linen, of their own wool and flax, enough for themselves, as also stockings.' (*Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*)

an iron pot in cider or vinegar with copperas provided a good black, the yarn being boiled in it for half an hour and then rinsed many times in cold spring water before drying in a shady place. Yarn was sometimes clouded various shades of blue by braiding three skeins of yarn before dipping in the indigo vat. To make the yarn light and dark alternately, tight bands of cotton were wound equidistant around the skeins before dipping in the dye tub.

Faded colours could sometimes be brightened by rinsing in the right solution. A pearl-ash solution improved faded purples or lilacs, while a little vinegar in the water restored reds and pinks. There were, of course, numerous dyes for sale at the apothecary's shop, but most settlers avoided purchases of any kind whenever possible. Many simple dyes were prepared in the kitchen, but some farmers who entered upon the work on a larger scale built a small shed for the purpose. The dye-house, a place of evil smells, was on that account usually erected at a distance from the home, and most settlers were glad enough to give up the business to the skilled dyer when he appeared in the community.

(5) WEAVING

The weaving process was carried out on two types of looms—the hand-loom for braid and ribbons, and the large loom for heavier cloth. The girls usually filled the quills with yarn, and these held it in the shuttle. The yarn was stretched upon pins to form the warp, while the woof or weft was carried under and over the warp at right-angles to it by the weaver or a mechanical shuttle. The loom held the threads tight, straight, and parallel, raising alternate threads and lowering those intervening. The bobbin was a small spool held in the weaver's hand and from which the thread unwound; and as he wove he pushed the new weaving tightly against the old with his other hand.

It took practice to weave a smooth even cloth, and most settlers did not attempt it. Even the crudest of looms was complicated, while the power looms in woollen mills were elaborate machines. Many mills were established in Upper Canada in the 1840's and 1850's. Usually two pounds of wool made a yard of cloth, and to the smaller factories a farmer might take his crop of wool and receive back half of the resulting cloth. The larger plants usually purchased their wool and sold their entire production of cloth.

Domestic weaving was more general in Lower Canada than in the upper province, and many thousands of looms were in use there.

> In the month of October [says one of the pioneers] great webs of this homespun could be found in the house of almost every settler. . . . There was very little fine goods at that time, and the agriculturist, when he was 'togged out' in his homespun, and his boots had got an extra dose of tallow, considered himself 'nae sheep-shank'.

One of the most primitive examples of ingenuity in making cloth is provided by a Loyalist woman. She lived near a small tannery and was given the hair from the tanner's vat. She cleaned, carded, and fulled it, and combining it with a hemp-like weed growing near her house, she doubled and twisted it into thread and wove it into her only blanket.

(6) FULLING

The fulling process, like the carding of wool, was often left to the factory rather than the home worker, but a fulling bee was called if the farmer intended to full his own cloth—that is, to make it shorter, thicker, and stronger. Long bench-tables were placed around the room for the cloth, and the guests at the frolic sat around them at intervals sufficient to allow each worker full use of his arms. The long web of cloth, which had been well soaked and soaped, was laid on the table, and every boy and girl seized a portion and pulled, pushed, and twisted it with great vigour. As they worked, they kept the great web gradually moving around the circle from right to left. Perhaps someone would start a song, which, like a sailors' chant, added to the jollity and enabled the fulling to be done with rhythmic precision* Work was forgotten as jokes and flirtation whiled away the time agreeably. After a couple of hours the cloth was fulled, and its greater strength and durability would long bear witness to the effectiveness of the workers. The web of cloth

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*The thickening bee has come down through the centuries. A traveller in Scotland nearly two hundred years ago observed the *wawking* or thickening of cloth: 'Twelve or fourteen women, divided into two equal numbers, sit down on each side of a long board, ribbed lengthways, placing the cloth on it: first they begin to work it backwards and forwards with their hands, singing at the same time, as at the quern: when they have tired their hands, every female uses her feet for the same purpose and six or seven pair of naked feet are in the most violent agitation, working one against the other: as by this time they grow very earnest in their labours, the fury of the song rises; at length it arrives to such a pitch that without breach of charity you would imagine a troop of female daemoniacs to have been assembled.' (Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides*, 1772, pp. 285-6.)

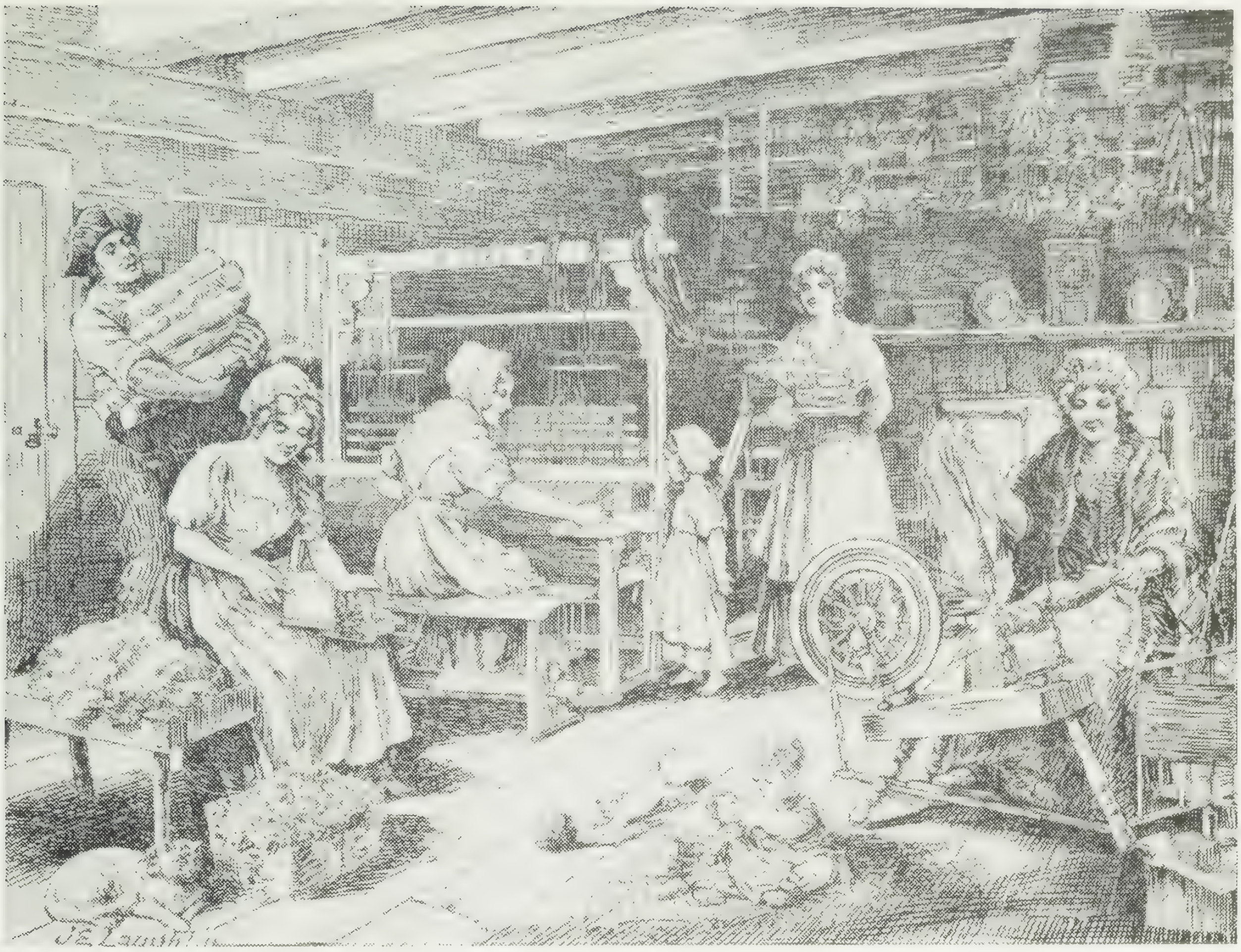
was carefully smoothed out flat on the tables, and then laid aside to be dried next day. A hearty supper and a still heartier square dance to the fiddle concluded the bee.

(7) MAKING CLOTHES

The fullcloth made fine suits and dresses, and gay home-spun was long popular and almost universal in the rural districts. Perhaps the flannel had been glossed at a fulling mill, for a glossy flannel, we are told, was 'an ideal for most girls, that they hoped to attain some day in the far distant future'. Some girls were so skilful at weaving that they could weave ten or twelve yards of fine flannel a day. A pioneer of the Talbot Settlement describes the great exertions and extensive travelling he had to undertake to make eighteen yards of flannel:

> In the year 1813 Colonel Talbot sent word to the few settlers that he had wool to be let out to be made into cloth on halves. I hired a horse and went and got fifty pounds. Here was forty miles travelled. I then hired a horse and took the wool to Port Dover and had it carded, for which I paid $6.25 and returned home, which made one hundred miles more. My wife spun the rolls, and I had made a loom for weaving but we had no reed for flannel. I then went sixty miles on foot to a reed-maker's, but he had none that was suitable, and would not leave his work on the farm until I agreed to give him the price of two reeds, $6.50, and work a day in his place; this I did and returned home with the reed. My wife wove the cloth, and I took my half to Dover to the fulling-mill. When finished I had eighteen yards, for which I had paid $34.75 and travelled 140 miles on horseback and 260 miles on foot, making four hundred miles, requiring in all about fifteen days' labour.

Wool clothes were preferred to cotton for a variety of reasons. In winter they kept out the cold, and in summer absorbed perspiration; while the busy housewife often found that cotton dresses were readily set afire as she worked about the hot stove. A fine woollen shawl, worn over the head like a hood, was popular for winter. In making clothes, perhaps the buttons alone were purchased, and one set often lasted for several suits. Most country-people made the everyday clothing of their menfolk, the pattern being obtained by ripping to pieces some old garment of good make—perhaps one which had been devoted to Sunday wear in the Old Land. Even if these home-made garments were not sewn with the skill of a tailor, they well served the purpose. Perhaps a man had one suit for church wear cut out by a town tailor—possibly even made up by him;



Courtesy of the Artist J. E. Laughlin

SPINNING AND WEAVING

Courtesy of the Artist Harold McCrea

THE QUILTING BEE
A great clearing-house for gossip.

and ready-made clothing could often be purchased in the general store.

At first the women made most of their own clothing. In early Loyalist times even a calico dress was a luxury set aside for a girl's wedding day, but as the years passed, more and more clothing could be purchased. Dress-makers and tailors frequently went about the country, making a year's supply of clothing while they boarded in the home—generally using the homespun which had been prepared for their coming.

(8) QUILT-MAKING

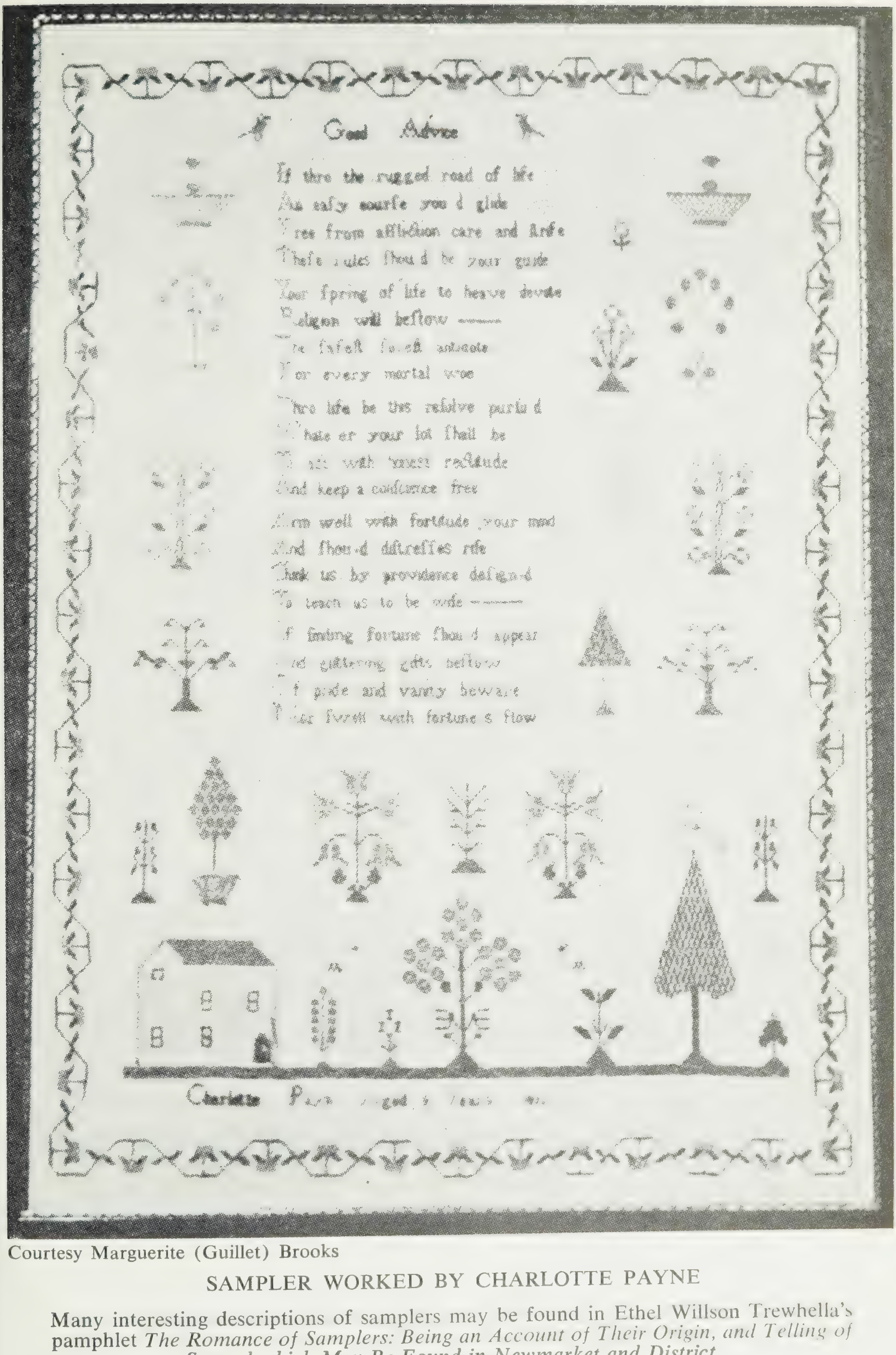
The weaving of blankets, quilts, and counterpanes was especially enjoyed by the women. The wool had, of course, been dyed, and the geometric pattern carefully worked out. Some of the favourites were known as 'Lovers' Knot', 'The Rose', 'Five-Star', and 'Chariot Wheels'.

In making patchwork quilts, pieces of cotton or wool cloth were arranged in 12-inch squares, which were sewn together to form the top of the quilt. Many were the familiar patterns—the 'Log Cabin', the 'Flower Basket', the 'Double Irish Chain'—and the skill in stitching and arranging colours is apparent in the quilts still proudly displayed in many homes. During the quilting bee the top of the quilt and its lining were fastened to a frame and quilted together, each woman working on a section; and the edges were finished with a binding.

(9) KNITTING AND EMBROIDERY

Knitting was one of the most general crafts among pioneer women, for there was a great demand for warm wool socks, stockings, mitts, and long gauntlets during the cold winter. Surplus socks could always find a market at the general store. One girl knitted seventy-five pairs of socks and with the proceeds purchased her trousseau, excepting such clothing as she could knit herself.

Ingenious designs were worked into mitts and socks by the best knitters. Some were striped, some spotted, others flowered or plain, ribbed or unribbed. Cradle quilts, chair covers, coverlets, and curtains were other products of the knitter's skill, and it was an early social custom for girls to carry their knitting with them when paying calls on their neighbours. The domestic



Courtesy Marguerite (Guillet) Brooks

SAMPLER WORKED BY CHARLOTTE PAYNE

Many interesting descriptions of samplers may be found in Ethel Willson Trewhella's pamphlet *The Romance of Samplers: Being an Account of Their Origin, and Telling of Several which May Be Found in Newmarket and District.*

arts exhibits in many a rural fair showed the careful workmanship and unremitting perseverance of the women.*

Closely related to work in wool was embroidery in cotton or silk. Many a young girl exemplified her skill in embroidery in making a sampler—in fact, it was almost a religious duty to do so. Coarse canvas cloth was generally used as a background, and on it the alphabet, numerals, the Lord's Prayer, and Bible verses were carefully worked amid pictures, flowers, and designs. Usually many kinds of stitching were employed, and when finished the sampler was framed. As the maker's name and age was always sewn upon it, the sampler is a prized heirloom in many a home.

Prior to Confederation, efforts were made to introduce the silk industry in Upper Canada. Mulberry trees were grown in Hamilton (Mulberry Street commemorates the locality), and a group of women of St. Catharines exhibited native silk at the Provincial Exhibition in Hamilton. But the Canadian climate was not sufficiently suitable for the industry to develop.

(10) STRAW WORK

The husks or straw of corn, oats, wheat, and rye were used by economical and industrious settlers for several purposes. Corn husks were preferred to straw for filling mattresses, but a nail comb—made by driving six or eight nails through a board—first tore them into thin strips. As they fell into the coarse linen bag, they were stirred and arranged by hand to make a soft and even mattress.

Stalks of grain to be used for straw weaving are usually cut before quite ripe, and so are not too brittle. The pioneers found rye straw most pliable, and that of the wild rice was also good. The straw was first braided into strands, and these were sewn together to make straw hats, baskets, etc. A wooden or iron needle united the individual strands of the ropes, though continual threading and tying proved too monotonous for some, who avoided it by using twine or the tough inner bark of the cedar to join the ropes of straw. Mrs. Traill gives the following directions for making door mats out of corn sheathing:

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*One of the best early books on the subject had some circulation in Ontario. It is *The Ladies' Hand Book of Fancy and Ornamental Work, Comprising Directions and Patterns for Working in Appliqué, Bead Work, Braiding, Canvas Work, Knitting, Netting, Tatting, Worsted Work, Quilting, Patchwork, &c., &c.* Illustrated with 262 Engravings. Compiled from the Best Authorities, by Miss Florence Hartley. Philadelphia: 1861.

> The rough ends of the husk are left projecting about an inch. The braid is made in this fashion: you take nine blades of the sheathing and tie them at the top to keep your work from coming undone: the braid is the simple three ply; but you use three blades together instead of one. To make it thick enough, every time you come to the left side insert there a fresh blade, leaving a little bit of the end to project at the edge. About twenty yards is sufficient for a door mat; it is sewn together with the big needle and twine or bark. Children can be taught to make these things; and they cost nothing but the time, and can be made of an evening, or on wet days when other work cannot be attended to.

Hats or mats of straw might be bleached by exposure to sulphur fumes in a covered box or barrel, but the mats were usually left in their natural colour. Some farmers made beehives of straw ropes, commencing at the top of the cone and working downward. The coils were bound together by twine or strips of elm or cedar bark. The bees were believed to aid in making their home still warmer by sealing up any holes. Among the various types of straw baskets were conical receptacles used by the 'Pennsylvania Dutch' immigrants for raising bread. In some districts the inner bark of the basswood and oak were used in weaving baskets and mats.

(11) RUGS AND CARPETS

Closely related to the weaving of straw mats is the making of carpets from yarn or rags. The coarser yarns, dyed in gay colours, were suitable for carpeting, but most people merely assembled the dyed yarn and sent it to weavers to be made into carpets. Rag carpets were, however, quite easy to make. Usually they were vivid in colour, but the pattern varied from none at all to intricate and beautiful designs, which formed a startling contrast to the otherwise drab log house.

The first work in rug-making was to assemble, cut up, and wind into balls all sorts of old clothes—linen, cotton, and woollen. A careful observer saw a pioneer woman with a basketful of such materials in front of her, and describes the work:

> She then took a piece, and with the scissors began cutting it into long narrow strips about a quarter of an inch wide, not wider; and indeed the narrower the strip the better. She did not cut quite through when she came to the end, but left just as much as would serve to hold it together with the next strip, turning the piece in her hand and making another cut; and so she went on cutting and tearing, till that piece was disposed; she then proceeded to a second, having first wound up the long strip: if a break occurred she joined

it with a needle and thread by tacking it with a stitch or two. Sometimes she got a bit that would tear easily, and then she went on very quickly with her work. Instead of selecting her rags all of one shade for the ball, she would join all kinds of colours and materials. 'The more lively the contrast, the better the carpet would look,' she said.

Sometimes, however, each colour was wound in a separate ball, and a striped or chain effect resulted when the various colours were woven into the rug in turn; while by the other method a hit-and-miss mottled pattern was the result.

Very large looms were needed for weaving rag carpets, so almost all settlers sent a certain number of pounds of these large balls to the weaver, together with cotton warp which had been doubled and twisted on the spinning-wheel. The weaver's charge was about 6d. a yard, and a pound and a half of rags, with the necessary warp, made a yard of carpet. Sometimes the warp was dyed by the owner, sometimes by the weaver.

Children were often taught to cut and join rags and wind them. For the best result, the rags were cut right through instead of turning the corners, for the carpet was much more regular, though more sewing was necessary. As even ordinary carpets cost 4s. a yard, a considerable saving was effected by the use of waste materials.

In modern times the inhabitants of Quebec are noted for their home-made hooked rugs. They are not woven on a loom, however, but worked with a hook on canvas stretched over a wooden frame somewhat similar to a quilting-frame.

(12) THE CULTIVATION OF HEMP

Flax and hemp, the fibres of which are used to make linen, sailcloth, ropes, etc., were in demand in the Canadian pioneer period. Premiums were offered by the Government for their cultivation in the British Provinces in America so that the British navy would not lack a continuous supply of sails and ropes. But, in spite of this encouragement, neither hemp nor flax was ever generally cultivated in Canada.

Hemp adapts itself to the hot climate of the tropics as well as to the rugged north temperate zone. It grows to a height of from three or four to twenty feet or more, the female flower on higher and stronger plants than the male. The stems are either hollow or filled with a soft pith, with a woody fibre and then a bark surrounding it. It is this outer fibre that the growers remove.

The more rapid the growth of hemp the longer the fibres, and the coarser fibres result rather from thin sowing than thick. Soon after flowering, the plant is pulled out by hand, and its treatment thereafter is similar to that of flax. While some of the finest fibres are similar to flax, they are in general used for coarser purposes, such as the manufacture of sailcloth and ropes, and for the caulking of ships. Oil of hempseed is used in some countries as fuel for lamps, as well as in the manufacture of paint, varnish, and soft soap.

Many early settlers attempted hemp culture, but with varying success. Philemon Wright, 'the White Chief of the Ottawa', was among the most successful cultivators, growing eighty-five per cent of the total in Lower Canada in 1802 and being awarded a silver medal by the Society of Arts. His crop grew to a height of fourteen feet, and he considered that Canada was a fine country for hemp. But the expense of preparing it for market led him—and most other growers—to give up its cultivation on a large scale, though he continued to grow small quantities for his own use.

> My hemp-peelers [he wrote] charged me one dollar per day, or one bushel of wheat, labourers being very scarce in the township of Hull. I sowed nearly 100 bushels of hemp-seed, which I sold in Montreal at a fair price. I was obliged to send the hemp to Halifax to find a sale for it. . . . I also built a hemp-mill, which cost me £300, which mill was by accident burnt.

Along the seacoast there were ropemakers who wove the strands of hemp fibre into ropes by the use of wheels, walking along as they twisted the fibres.

(13) THE CULTIVATION OF FLAX

Flax cultivation was more extensive, particularly in Lower Canada, where 1,313,648 lbs. was produced in 1827. The seed was sown in damp locations during the last week of April, and by the middle of July it had blossomed and was about to go to seed. It was then ready to pull, stem and root, which was best done by hand to avoid injury to the fibres. In later years a special machine for the purpose was introduced, while many farmers found that a reaper, if it cut close to the ground, did the work satisfactorily for all but the finest linen.

The pulled flax was bound in small sheaves and spread out on the ground to be cured in the sun. The *bobs,* or seeds, were taken out, to be used for the following year's seeding or sold

Courtesy of the Artist Jerrine Kinton

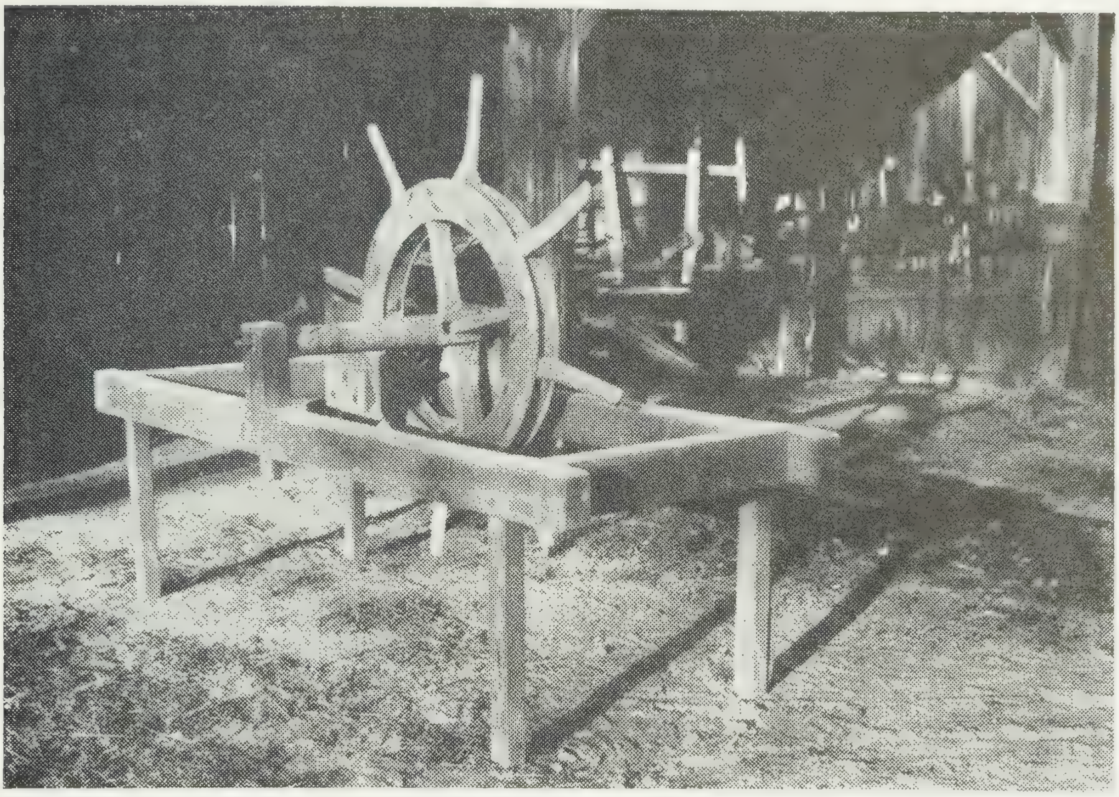
FLAX, WATERLOO COUNTY

to an extractor of flaxseed oil. At the middle of the nineteenth century there were numerous factories where oil was extracted and oil-cake made. The process of removing the seeds was called ripping, and was done by a comb of heavy wood or iron, with which the flax was beaten. The removal of the leaves was called retting.

The most difficult processes in the preparation of flax were yet to come, and many an unskilled farmer failed to perform them properly. The straw had to be split into fibres, and the useless centre taken out, but a certain amount of weathering and soaking was first needed to rot the pith. This *steep* lasted from ten to twenty days, and a process of fermentation dissolved the cement which holds the filaments and fibres together, enabling the removal of the *shave* or woody centre.

The next step was the use of the swingle-board or scutching machine. The flax was pounded between sets of long wooden knives or flax brakes on a heavy block of wood: the worker held a bunch of flax in his left hand and brought the brake (or *break*) down with force with his right. It was hard and dusty work.

The hackling or hetcheling followed. In this process the good silky fibre was separated from the coarse tow or *shives* by combing the slightly moistened fibre. A long wooden *sword,*



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

HAND-MADE MACHINE FOR BRAKING FLAX STALKS

sharp on both sides, was sometimes used, or the large prickly head of the teasel or *fuller's thistle*. The hackle teeth straightened the fibres, and fineness of fibre resulted from much hackling. If these processes were successfully carried out the farmer had a soft, silky fibre ready to spin.

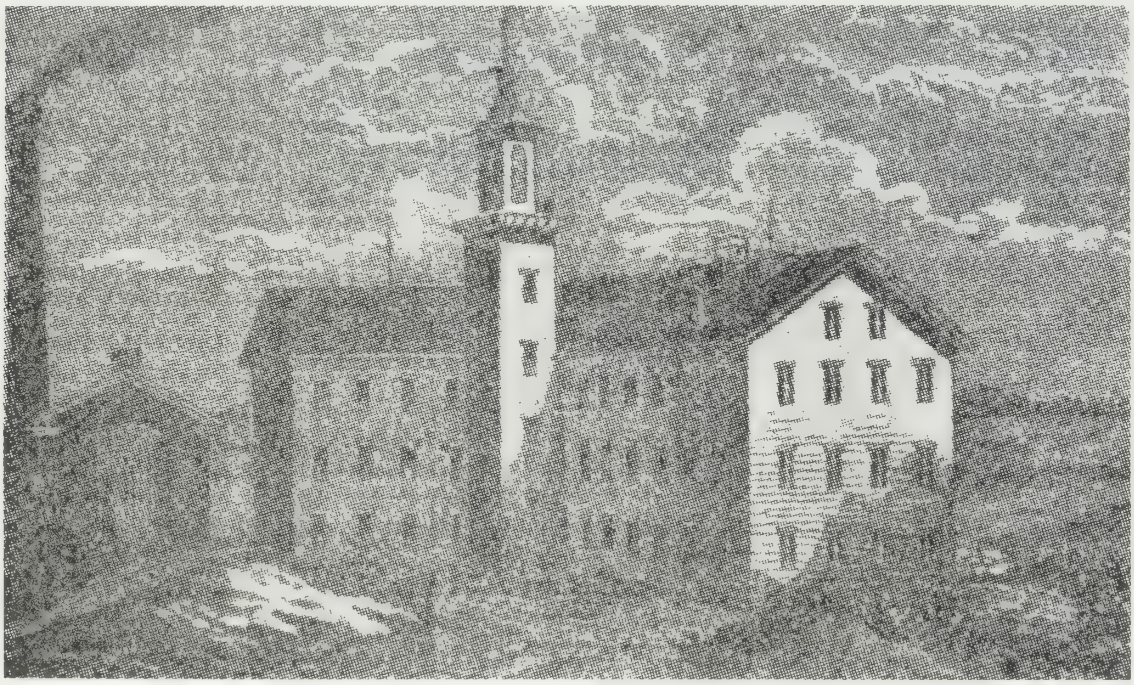
The difficulties of preparing hemp and flax for the spinners and weavers indicated the need of mills for the purpose. But an emigrant guidebook of 1843 states that there was not then a single flax mill in Upper Canada. It was therefore suggested that groups of neighbours should combine to erect a mill in which their flax and hemp could be treated. This was not often done, however, and many settlers discontinued cultivation rather than attempt to surmount the difficulties.

(14) MAKING LINEN

A smaller wheel was used for spinning linen than for spinning yarn. The distaff was a forked piece of wood at the front of the wheel, and on it was placed the whitened flax fibre. The spinner pulled it off and wrapped it around the spindle, turning the wheel by a foot treadle: the fibre was lengthened out and twisted into thread, which was then wound on a bobbin. When the bobbin was full, the linen thread was wound or tied into skeins or *hanks,* usually by one of the daughters using a reel.

To make the skeins white a bleaching process followed. Ashes, slaked lime, or sour milk formed the usual solution for the purpose, but the best results were obtained only by twenty or thirty insertions, between which the skeins were dried in the sun.

Often a year and a half elapsed between the planting of the flaxseed and the finished linen, for the thread had still to be woven. The loom used for woollen cloth was similarly employed for weaving linen, the earliest Loyalist settlers using a mixture to produce *linsey-woolsey.* The *tow,* or coarse fibres, were commonly made into ropes, grain bags, or rough working trousers, but the best made fine linen sheets. At first the cloth was hard and stiff, but continual washing and pounding worked it into a softer texture. This was heavy work, for all the grease had to be removed, and the boys and men generally did most of it. In Lower Canada a frolic was sometimes held from house to house to do the fulling, boys and girls dancing up and down upon the cloth in big tubs until it was soft.



Canada Farmer

FLAX MILL AT STREETSVILLE, 1866

Mrs. Sarah Slaght, an early settler in the Long Point district, tells with pardonable pride how she made her supply of linen during the first year of her marriage:

> In the barn there was a quantity of flax. . . . Job broke it for me and then I took off the shives, hetcheled it, takin' out the tow, which was carded and spun on the big wheel like wool, and which furnished the fillin' in weavin' the coarser cloth used for towelling, tickin', bagging, etc. The flax was spun on the little wheel. We were married in October, and during the winter I made up forty-three yards of cloth out of that flax, and this gave us a supply of table cloths, towels, sheets, tickin', bags, etc.

Besides the difficult process,* the extension of the flax industry was retarded by the lack of a market for the straw. But cultivation increased in the eighteen-sixties, especially in Lower Canada, for there was a scarcity of cotton during the American Civil War. In 1861 the linen produced in Upper Canada was 37,055 yards, but in Lower Canada** the production totalled over one million yards. Improvements in the process of manufacture included soaking the flax in water of a temperature of 80° to 90° instead of the long weathering, but this was not commonly done in Canada.

*The Ottawa River, John Mactaggart noted, would bleach coarse linens like Irish Dowlas very effectively. Whether from vegetable or mineral matter in the water or the strong summer sun, he found that 'without any chemical process, without any artificial alkalis, here we see the dingy web becoming like snow in the course of a couple of weeks'.

**The names Upper and Lower Canada were commonly used long after the provinces became officially known as Canada West and Canada East by the terms of the Act of Union, 1841.

CHAPTER XII

INDUSTRIES ABOUT THE FARM

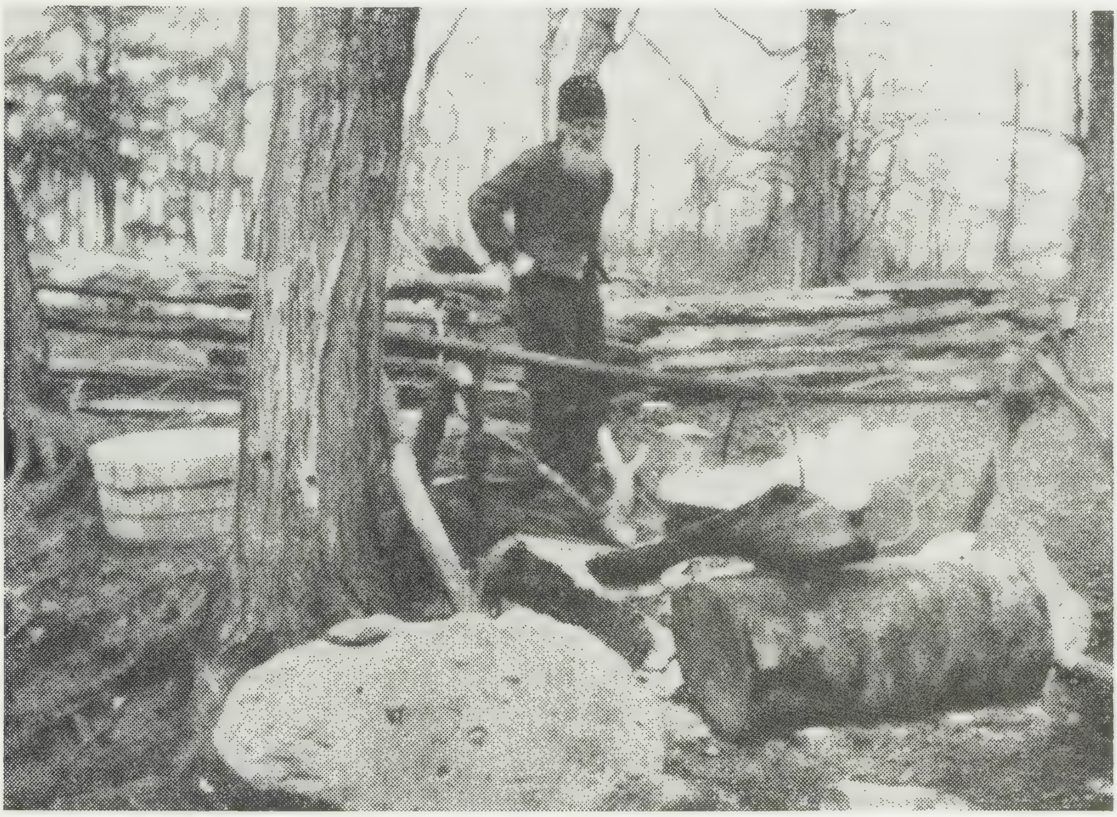
(1) MAPLE SUGAR MAKING

LIKE the construction and use of the birch canoe, the manufacture of maple sugar is one of the contributions of the American Indian to our civilization. In the early seventeenth century French missionaries observed the Indians making sugar each spring in a primitive manner. In the Jesuit *Relations* there are references to 'Maple Water' running from the trees 'toward the end of Winter'; and to the tree Micktan, 'which they split in the Spring to get from it a juice, sweet as honey or as sugar'. In times of famine the Indians were observed eating the bark of this tree—the sugar maple.

The Indian process of manufacture was crude. The tree was gashed with a tomahawk, and a wooden chip carried the sap drop by drop into a birch-bark receptacle; or, in the case of the Mohawks, into a basswood sap trough hollowed by a stone adze with the aid of fire.

In boiling the sap, earthenware pots were used by those who possessed them; but some tribes had no better method than to drop red-hot stones into the sap trough, continuing this crude procedure until the sap was eventually boiled down. This laborious and primitive process produced only a small quantity of coarse and dirty sugar, but even that was highly prized and formed a considerable part of the food supply of some tribes. With the coming of fur trader and settler, the Indians obtained iron kettles and carried on the process in a more civilized manner. In the sugar season they usually encamped near a maple grove, where the women of the tribe entered into the work. The sugar was usually packed in neat birch-bark baskets called *mokuks*, and at early markets these boxes were a characteristic sight, the usual price of the sugar being from six to ten cents a pound.

The settlers carried on the industry in much the same fashion. Sometimes sugar was also made from the sap of the black walnut. Mrs. J. G. Simcoe, wife of the first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, was given a sample, and found that it 'looks darker than that from the maple, but I think it is sweeter'. While sugar-making was heavy work it was commonly a time of enjoyment, for it was in process during the season which heralded the end of winter. To ensure cleanliness and convenience the sugar-bush was carefully underbrushed and rotten logs and other obstructions removed. If cattle were in the neighbourhood a fence was erected to keep them away from the sap-troughs.



MAKING MAPLE SUGAR

Careless settlers merely gashed the tree with an axe to set the sap flowing, but the proper method to avoid permanent damage to the sugar-bush was to make a hole with an inch auger. Sometimes the gash of an axe produced the better flow, but unless it was intended to cut the tree down shortly it was much better to use an auger or a tapping iron. A round spile, hollow in the centre, was driven about an inch into the hole, or a gouge was made below the hole to hold the gutter. It was found that the tap was best placed on the south side of the tree in the early weeks of the season, but on the north side if it required renewing towards the end. The sap ran best on warm sunny days following frosty nights.

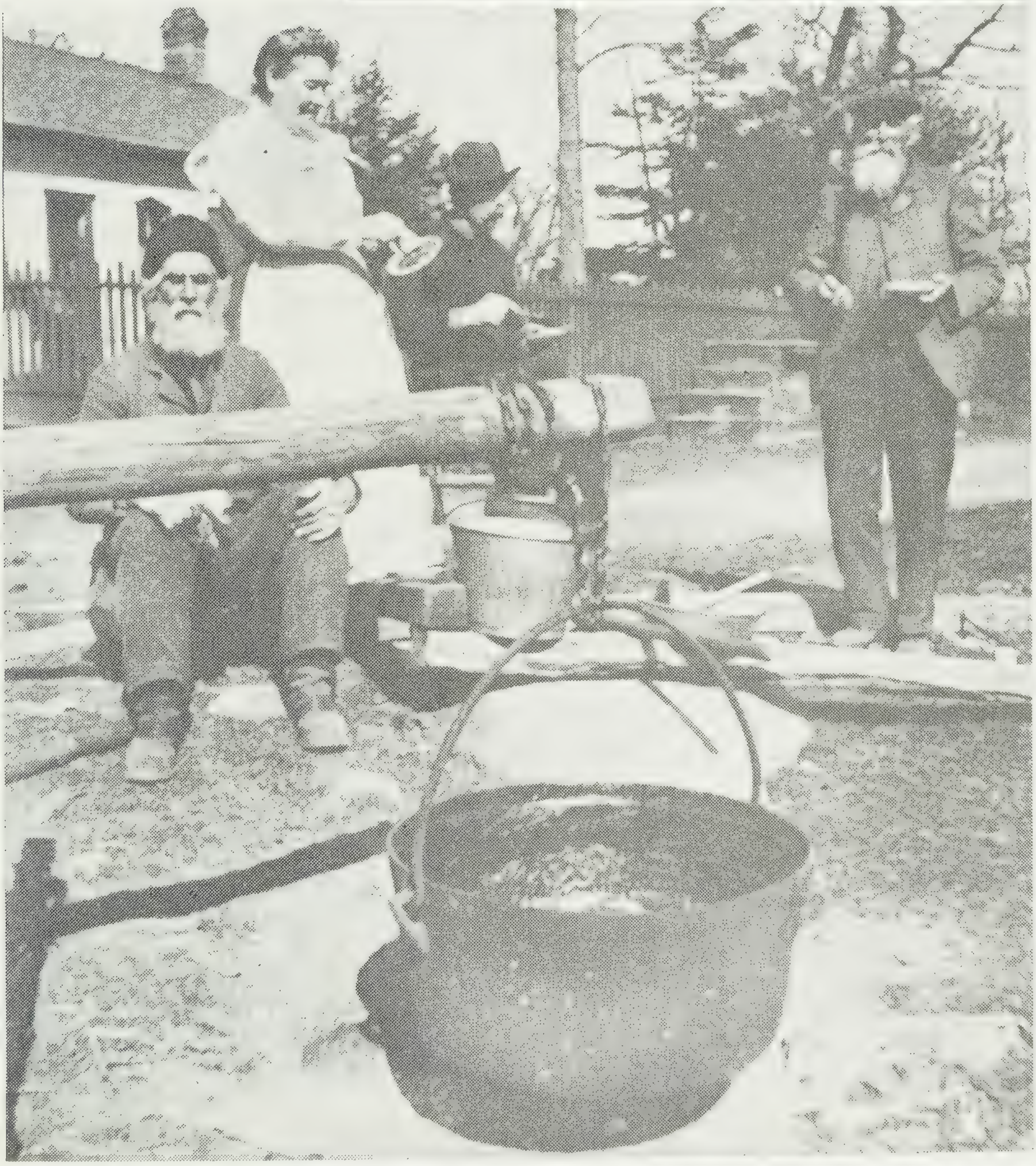
Nowadays pails are commonly used to hold the sap, but sap-troughs of pine, ash, cherry, or butternut, holding three or four gallons each, were more generally used by early settlers. The troughs were placed directly under the drop from the spiles, and at regular intervals the sap was collected.

At the centre of the grove a place was selected for the boiling, and roads leading to it radiated in all directions. Sometimes the men carried the sap in pails by the use of a wooden collar or yoke about their shoulders, from which cords were suspended; but large-scale producers frequently used an ox-sleigh carrying one or more barrels of sap to the boiling-place. A wooden tundish or funnel with the capacity of a sap-trough provided a convenient aid in pouring the sap into the barrel. A large store-trough at the boiling-place held the sap until all was in readiness for boiling down, and extra barrels were provided if the flow of sap was exceptionally good.

Meanwhile the children have aided in collecting and preparing a large supply of firewood, for when boiling commences, the fires must burn steadily for many hours—often right through the night. As evaporation proceeds, the sap becomes a thin syrup and is almost ready for the 'sugaring-off', a festive time when sugar-eating bees and a dance to the fiddle provided enjoyment for the boys and girls. But first the molasses was carefully strained through wool into a copper boiler, and a clarifier used to remove earthy particles and other impurities. Milk or a piece of fat pork was sometimes used for the purpose, but eggs were more satisfactory. Half a dozen eggs, with the shells, were beaten up with a quart of the molasses, the mixture was stirred into the kettle while both were cool, and the pot was then brought to a boil over a slow fire. As it began to simmer, the impurities rose to the surface with the beaten eggs, and just as the boiling-point was reached the kettle was swung off the fire and the scum carefully skimmed off, leaving the molasses bright and clear.

Again the liquid was placed over the fire, and this time it had to be even more carefully tended, for it would boil over in an instant—a disaster which, however, might be halted by pouring a little new sap into the pot or throwing a shovel of snow on the fire. Several methods were employed to detect the exact time to remove the boiling syrup from the fire. If it

MR. AND MRS.
JAMES O'HARA
Golden Wedding
Anniversary,
February 3,
1898.



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

SUGARING-OFF, MOIRA RIVER

Old times lived again when the O'Haras celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

hardened at once when dropped on snow it was ready. Samuel Strickland used a stick on which he had cut a narrow slit an inch long and one-eighth of an inch wide. When this was dipped into the molasses at the right time a thin film would fill the hole; then, if a long bubble could be blown from it, the molasses was sufficiently boiled. Pans or moulds received it, and there it hardened into cakes.

Besides maple syrup there was maple butter, which was in consistency about half way between syrup and sugar. Mrs. Traill sometimes made 'maple sugar sweeties' during the sugaring-off. These were small candies formed by pouring thick syrup into a dish, stirring in a little flour and butter, and flavouring with lemon, peppermint, or ginger. When cold and hard the candy was cut into small squares.

There were many variations in the process of sugar-making. On some farms several kettles were used in the boiling and the sap poured from one to another as it got thicker, fresh sap being added to the first boiler from time to time. We are told that sometimes the mother of the family supervised the boiling, rocking her youngest baby in a sap-trough cradle meantime.

The early sap was found to be much the best. April sap soured quickly and was difficult to grain into sugar. A little saleratus or a handful of quick lime would remove some of the acidity, but such sap was best used for vinegar. While maple syrup* was not extensively made in the pioneer period, most settlers who had a maple grove produced large quantities of sugar, for West Indian sugar was expensive. A sugar-bush of 500 trees produced from 800 to 1,200 lbs. of sugar in a good season, and many farmers had from 1,000 to 3,000 lbs. as a result of their work. Nowadays the greater part of Canada's maple sugar is produced in Quebec and exported to the United States to be used in curing tobacco.

(2) LIME-BURNING

Commercial lime is obtained by burning limestone in a kiln. The resulting quicklime, or burned lime, may be turned into slaked lime by the addition of water, which combines with the quicklime to form a light, white, dry powder; and this, mixed with sand or used alone, becomes mortar by gradually hardening as it absorbs carbonic acid from the air.

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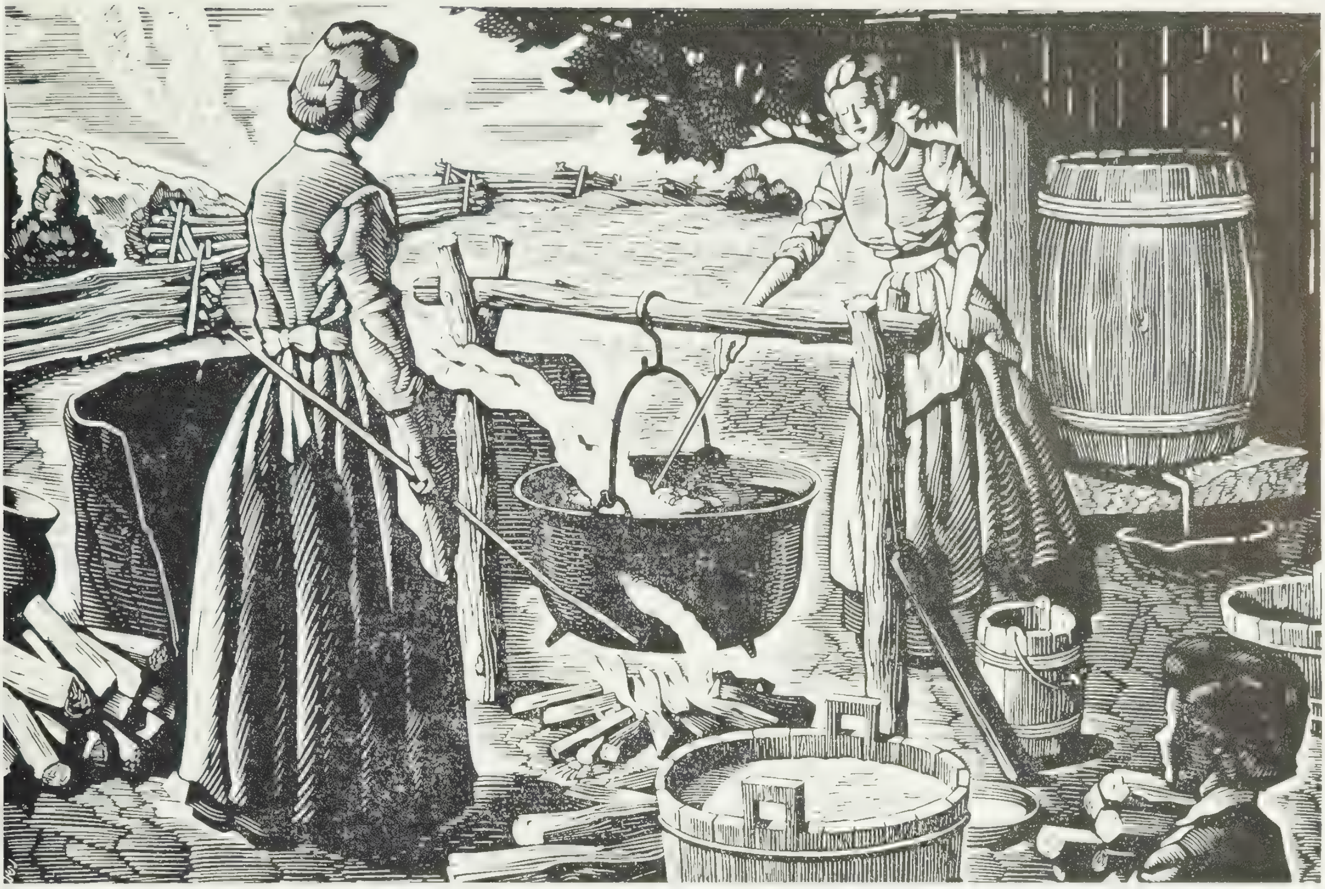
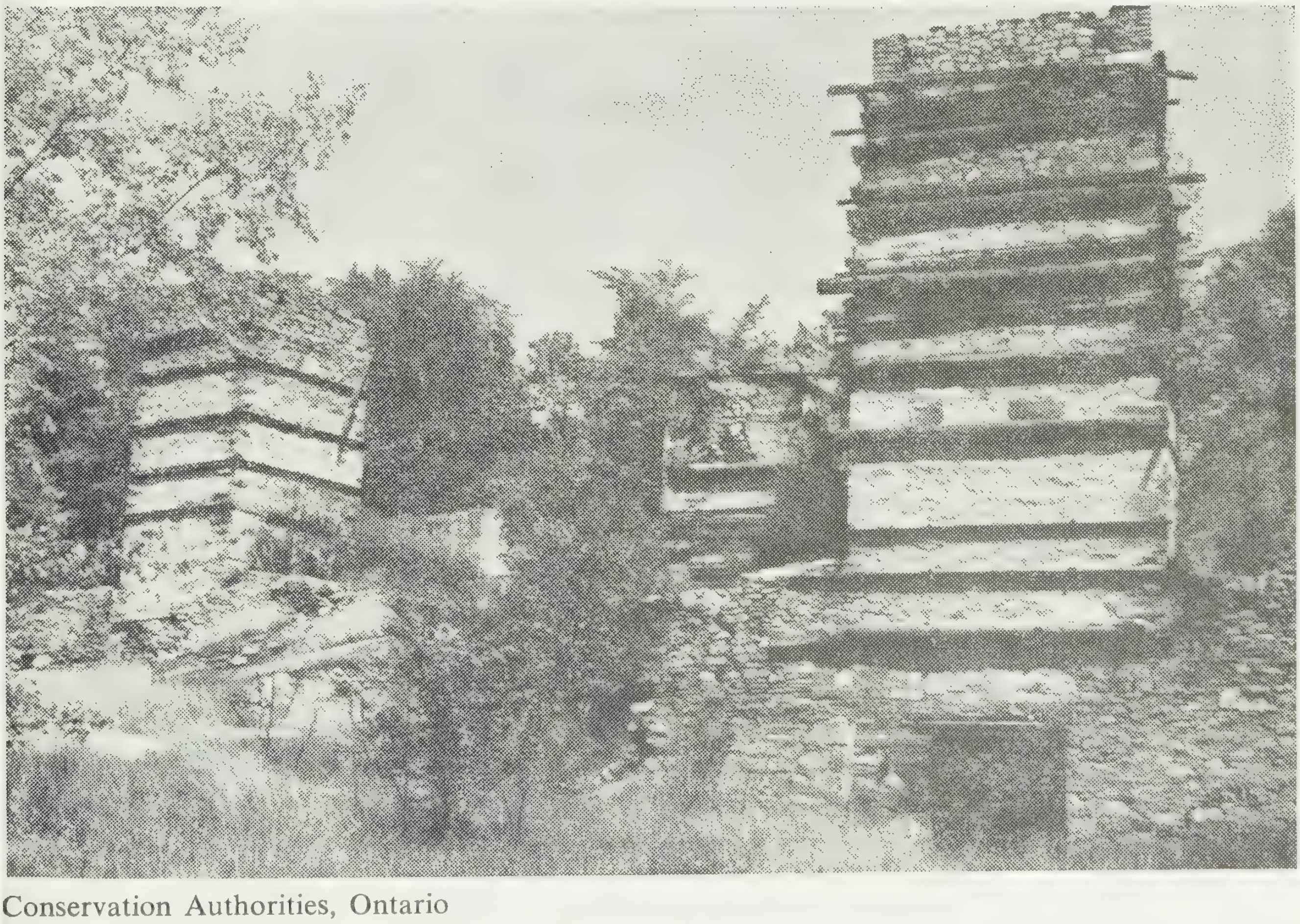
*William Adair recalled making 70 gallons of maple syrup and taking it to London to sell. He sold one gallon for 50 cents and took the rest back home.



International Nickel Ltd. Russell Taber

SOAP MAKING



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

OLD LIME-KILNS NEAR KELSO, NASSAGAWAYA TOWNSHIP

Lime-burning was a process of importance to the pioneer settler when he had prospered sufficiently to improve his log shanty. Many regions, however, contained no limestone, while settlers near towns often preferred to buy their supply.

The easiest method of burning limestone did not produce the whitest lime but was more commonly used. Sometimes lime was burned while logging was in progress, for a very large log-heap was needed. Samuel Strickland calculated that he would need about one hundred bushels for plastering his walls and building chimneys, so he constructed an immense pile of the largest logs available. The timber from half an acre was needed to build the heap, and on top a framework of logs was constructed to hold the limestone.

Twenty cartloads of stone were then drawn to the log-heap and placed within the frame after being broken into small pieces with a sledge-hammer. The fire was then lit, and the pile burned during the night; but the intense heat of the coals prevented the lime being removed until a week had passed. It was then collected and covered, but it was impossible to eliminate entirely small pieces of unburnt stone, which detracted from the value of the lime as plaster.

As settlement progressed a few men in each district where limestone was available specialized in lime-burning. Many villages had two or three large kilns which supplied lime to the surrounding territory.

Some settlers used clay as a substitute for lime. To prepare it for use the clay was mixed with boiling water and then worked in front of a fire. The resulting material made a satisfactory cement.

(3) CHARCOAL-BURNING

Charcoal-burning has not been as extensively practised in Canada as in the Old World, but some pioneer farmers supplied themselves with charcoal. The process consists of burning wood in a limited supply of air, which has the effect of retaining most of the carbon, instead of burning the wood to white ashes in the open air.

The charcoal-heap is usually of conical form, consisting of broken pieces of wood in rows. Holes are left at the bottom for the entry of air, and a hollow space in the centre to serve as a flue for the escape of gas. Over the heap a covering of ashes or turf is placed, and the pile is ignited by throwing burning pieces of wood into the central opening, where a wooden grate prevented their falling at once to the bottom.

> In making a 'pit' of charcoal [wrote a pioneer producer of it, William Adair, who lived on the county line between Middlesex and Elgin and sold his charcoal for a York shilling—12½ cents—a bushel] about ten to twelve cords of wood were used. A pole was set in the ground. Cordwood was piled on end in two tiers, with shorter pieces to round off the top. Straw was piled all around the wood, with air holes around the bottom. The fire was started at the top and then the top was covered with earth. It took from three to five days to burn a pit. . . . The men stayed at the job day and night. The pit gradually decreased in height. At last some coals, on the lowest side, were raked out, and soon there was a circle of black coal around the pit.

The burning of a charcoal-heap proceeds gradually from top to bottom and to the outside, and fresh wood is thrown in continually as the central portion burns away. If the smoke is thick and white the combustion is satisfactory, but if it is thin or a blue flame appears, the wood is burning too fast and the air-holes must be partially stopped up and more sod placed on the heap. When the burning is complete the whole is covered over and left to cool for two or three days; whereupon the heap is broken up and water thrown on any pieces still hot. Usually the volume of charcoal is about three-fifths of the wood used, or by weight about one-quarter. The uses of charcoal are numerous, but for the pioneer settler it was merely a first-class fuel that he obtained. John Thomson, settled near Lake Simcoe, noted in his diary on several occasions that his men were engaged in the work. 'Five hands commenced cutting basswood logs and splitting them to make a charcoal heap,' he wrote on October 14, 1834. On another occasion he noted that his men were tending the charcoal-heaps both night and day.*

(4) MAKING SOAP

During the clearing of forests for pioneer settlements most of the timber was burned to get rid of it as speedily as possible. In many instances, however, an effort was made to save the best ashes, for they were extensively used in the manufacture of soap and fertilizers at that time. If it was not possible to use

*Two Canadians of central European origin developed charcoal-burning near Apsley, Peterborough County, in the nineteen-forties. They found a ready market for their product in the city of Peterborough.

them immediately cribs of logs were built to store them, and large strips of bark served as a covering. Hardwood ashes were much the best for soap—in fact, many softwood trees were entirely useless.

Grease was the other main ingredient which entered into the manufacture of soap. Most pioneer homes had consequently a soap-box where all sorts of fat rinds, dripping, grease, etc., were stored in readiness for soap-making. The entrails of animals were used, and even bones were boiled down in strong lye, the lime content improving the soap. Enough soap was commonly made to last a year, and it was thought best to choose a time when the moon was new, for the soap tended to dry out too much as the moon waned.

At first ash-leaches were hollowed basswood logs set on end on a drainage platform of split slabs, but barrels or vats were used as they became available. The leach was slightly tilted on a grooved board or trough and raised a couple of feet above the ground, so that a crock or tub could be placed under the groove to catch the lye.

At the bottom of the leach a layer of split lathing or twigs was placed, and then a layer of straw. Sometimes a layer of lime was placed next, or it could be dissolved in boiling water and mixed throughout the barrel or even poured in at the top, the total amount being about two quarts to a barrel of ashes; its purpose was to neutralize certain salts which were injurious to the soap. The ashes were then put in and pounded down, and at the top a round hole was made to receive the water. Hot water was first put in, and then as it filtered through, cold soft water was added from time to time. When the ashes were packed tight, it was sometimes two or three days before the lye began to seep through the holes into the groove beneath. As the water soaked through it dissolved the alkali in the ashes, and the lye ran out into the receptacle beneath. When the lye was seen to become weak and light in colour it was apparent that all the strength had been extracted from the ashes. The lye was sometimes tested for strength, being about right when it would buoy up an egg or potato half above the surface. A personal recollection adds a good deal to the record:

> One of my boyhood memories [writes the Reverend L. F. Kipp, long a prominent journalist in Montreal and Toronto] was the annual making of soft soap, and the appearance two or three times per year

> of the ashman. Our wood ashes were put into a little shed near the orchard fence.
>
> As far as soft soap was concerned, it was quite an operation. On a platform grooved to run the lye down to a great iron kettle was a 4-foot log hollowed out to the platform. This was filled with ashes, and pails of water poured into the top. In a few days a deep-red liquid came out. When mother had sufficient, a fire was set under the big iron kettle into which went all the bones and fat saved in the winter. When the lye had eaten as many bones and fat as it could you had a soap like liver. Believe me, it would take off any dirt misplaced—and the skin on your hands as well!*

While 'cold soap' could be made without boiling, in general a soap kettle was needed to produce a satisfactory result. Crotched sticks a few feet apart in the ground supported a pole which suspended the kettle by a chain, and underneath a steady fire boiled the lye and grease. Some used twelve pounds of grease in making a barrel of soft soap, others three pounds to a pail of strong lye. When there was a thick scum of grease on top the lye had absorbed its quota, and more lye was poured in; while if the soap did not thicken and there was no scum at the top more grease was added. For soft soap the kettle was removed when the contents formed a clear mass, and a crock received the slimy material. It stood by the family wash-basin and you helped yourself to a handful of soft soap when you washed.

Sometimes the soap was too strong and needed water to make it thicken. By testing a few spoonfuls in a saucer the proportion of water to add was found; in some instances, where the lye was very strong, as much as double the quantity of water could be added. A pint of turpentine or some resin was sometimes poured in during the boiling to improve the quality of the soap. A barrel of ashes and twelve pounds of grease would produce some forty pounds of soap, and the process was usually completed in one day. Many an elderly man, unwilling to change habits of long standing, continued to make soft soap for his own use, while his children and grandchildren preferred 'new-fangled' things.

'Cold soap' could also be made in a barrel through the action of the sun. The grease was boiled down in weak lye and strained into the barrel, being mixed with strong lye and stirred from time to time. If the mixture did not thicken in a week or ten days more lye or grease was added. Some settlers

*Letter to the author, January 30, 1962. Mr. Kipp is 84 years of age, and his vivid memories go back to the mid-eighteen-eighties.

made a low-grade soap by merely mixing the fat and lye, while others carried out part of the process by boiling the grease and lye and then letting the sun do the rest.

Hard soap was made from good soft soap, or by continuing the soft-soap process a little further. Several handfuls of salt were stirred into the boiling soap, and as it boiled, it was seen that the soap was coming to the top and the reddish-brown lye sinking to the bottom. Set aside overnight the soap formed a thick cake, which was removed and boiled with turpentine or resin and more salt. When it thickened it was ready to pour into wooden moulds or shallow pans, and as it got hard it was cut into bars and placed behind the stove, where the heat dried it out.

Numerous washing mixtures were made by boiling soap with quicklime and sal-soda (washing soda), and adding resin, turpentine, and salt. Potash soap was another variety of soft soap, made in much the same fashion. Washing-boards, with wooden or zinc rollers, were soon found in the homes of the well-to-do, for, as Mrs. Traill put it, 'In Canada, no servant will wash without a washing-board.'

When lye was extracted on a large scale the soap manufactory was usually located on a running stream, from which water was pumped and distributed to the leaches by wooden gutters or pipes.

(5) THE POTASH INDUSTRY

It was early found that North American ashes contained a larger percentage of pure potash than those of the Baltic regions, and consequently there was long a steady demand for American ashes. As the potash industry was somewhat intricate most settlers did not proceed beyond the extracting of the *ley* or lye, or at most to the point where they obtained black salts. Those who undertook the complete process found that considerable equipment, knowledge, and skill were essential.

There was a great difference in the amount and quality of ashes, and of the resulting potash, which could be obtained from various plants and trees. Ferns furnished most ashes, shrubs gave more than trees, and leaves and small branches more than trunks. The hardest woods, and particularly beech, provided most alkali, while pine and other soft woods were generally unsuitable. There were, too, variations in the process for different types of ash. To obtain satisfactory results earth and other impurities had to be kept out of the ashes, and there must be no unburnt particles of wood. For good ashes farmers could obtain from 6d. to 9d. a bushel at a potashery.

Large iron kettles, costing from $80 to $100 each, were made at Three Rivers especially for the potash industry, for ordinary vessels would not stand the intense heat needed to boil down the lye and melt the salts. Before the lye was boiled down it was sometimes passed through fresh ashes, so that it would have a greater alkali content. When of the right strength it was a dark brown colour, but if it was not clean there was great difficulty in achieving satisfactory results in the rest of the process.

Courtesy of Mrs. George Downey

OLD J. B. MACDONALD FOUNDRY, TIVERTON

The black salts obtained by boiling down the lye was at first of the consistency of porridge, but as it cooled it quickly hardened like clay mortar. The next step was to melt the salts to eliminate impurities. A farmer with experience in the industry gives a good description of the melting process:

> A rough furnace of loose stones was built around the kettle, which was raised a foot or more from the ground so that the fire could be put right under the pot. At the back of this furnace was a chimney of clay and loose stones that carried away the smoke and made the necessary draught. The fire required to melt black salts had to be intensely hot. Indeed, it was so hot that it would nearly melt the potash kettles, big and strong as they were. One had to be very careful when the sticks were poked into the fire, or a hole might be

made in the bottom of the pot. . . . Most of this work was done at night, as it was easier to see the colour of the melted stuff, which looked quite a bit like molten iron. When the copper colour was seen—a dark red—the fire was allowed to die down, and the black salts became potash. Sometimes potash was grey when it had cooled, but the best samples were pea-green in colour.

When a blue blaze appeared over the molten mass it was usually poured into another pot called a cooler, which had been heated to receive it. There it became a solid mass and was placed, round side down, in a large oak barrel; another mass, fitting flat side down at the top, made up the characteristic barrel of potash. It was hot, heavy, continuous and dangerous work,* yet pioneer women often took part in it. It is recorded that one woman made eight barrels of potash, at the same time looking after seven young sons and doing most of the farm work.

When potash was made on a large scale it was most convenient to erect the equipment on a hillside along a running stream. Above were the wedge-shaped leaches of double-thick planks, from which the raw lye ran into a reservoir trough or tank. Still lower down was the large potash kettle, perhaps five feet in diameter, into which the lye was dipped by ladles or ran directly through a faucet. Large stones were built around the kettle to hold it in place. At first the boiling took place in daytime, but as the lye became thicker it had not only to be watched day and night but also to be stirred continually with a large spoon shaped like a frying-pan and having a ten-foot handle, of which at least the first four were of iron. If only one kettle was used for boiling, it might take a week to make a barrel of potash, but potasheries usually had several in process at the same time, as well as a series of melting pots and coolers, and ropes and pulleys to handle the solid potash and pack it into barrels for shipment.

Potash was usually shipped eastward to Montreal in large oak-stave barrels holding 560 lbs., which were valued at from $80 to $120 each. The early settler frequently found that cash could be more readily obtained for potash or black salts than for wheat; and in many settlements representatives of potasheries would call and purchase ashes which the farmer had

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*'I took a job,' wrote Samuel Birdsall in 1862 with reference to 1810, 'of boiling and making potash for the late Captain Humphrey, and worked 22 days and nights, only indulging in bed 4 nights, keeping them [*i.e.*, the fires] going day and night.'

Courtesy of the Artist C. W. Jefferys

MAKING SOAP AND POTASH

Even women engaged in the heavy work.

saved up. A bushel of hardwood ashes made about five pounds of potash, while a 560-lb. barrel was 'the concentrated product of an acre of standing timber, the unbroken forest'. In the 1820's and 1830's the ash trade was one of the most important in Canada. In 1824 about £350,000 was invested in it in Lower Canada—an amount equal to almost half the value of all imports. Canadian ashes were carefully inspected before export and consequently stood high in foreign markets.

Pearl ash was a refined potash, calcined and fused in an oven or a specially constructed furnace. It brought a higher price, was pure white, and was used in making saleratus or baking soda. Sometimes settlers purchased it for baking, for 'a piece the size of your two fists would last the housekeeper for a couple of years for this purpose—it was so strong'. Others burned corncobs to fine white ashes, and from the lye produced an excellent alkali for raising bread.

Potash was used in the manufacture of glass, where it served to clear the sand. It was also used in certain chemical processes, such as making colours fast in printed cotton materials. Until the end of the century a few potasheries remained, but better and cheaper chemical methods of producing potash put an end to this typically pioneer industry.

(6) OTHER FOREST PRODUCTS

Some farmers added to their income by extracting from trees such products as balsam, turpentine, pitch, spruce gum, oil of hemlock, sassafras, and sumach dye. In the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada particularly, there was a considerable trade in hemlock bark, which was used in tanning leather. Just before Confederation the manufacture of wood-pulp and paper from softwood trees became prominent, the aspen or poplar being of particular value for the purpose; this industry, however, was not one for the individual farmer, but required extensive mills.

CHAPTER XIII

GRAIN AND ITS PRODUCTS

(1) GRINDING GRAIN INTO FLOUR

In 1783 the first Loyalist settlers near Kingston took part in a raising bee to construct the first grist mill in the region that, eight years later, was named Upper Canada. This was a government mill, and a similar one was erected the same year near the mouth of Four-Mile Creek in the Niagara district. By 1787 a third mill was in operation on the Napanee River, and before the close of the century a number of privately-owned grist mills had been erected in those parts of the province where extensive settlement was in progress.

But many settlers were in regions remote from any mill, and various substitutes were used to grind grain into flour. Some of the first Loyalists were issued small handmills, in appearance and operation much like a coffee or pepper mill, but difficulty of operation made them unpopular. Later settlers sometimes crushed grain by using stones, after the fashion of the Indians. Another method consisted of boiling grain in lye, and then drying it before the fire until it burst; after which it was boiled in water and eaten as *mush*. This process sometimes took a whole day. The first settlers in Smith Township, Peterborough County, in 1818, had even to resort to chewing corn until it was soft enough for their children to eat. Long trips to the nearest flour mill, sometimes by boat, often on foot through the woods, were a common occurrence in every part of Upper Canada.

The best and most commonly used substitute for stone grinders was the hominy-block or plumping-mill. A hardwood tree-trunk of suitable size was selected and hollowed out by fire, aided by a knife or axe and perhaps a red-hot cannonball, the outside of the stump being kept wet during the process. In the mortar so formed a few quarts of grain was pounded by a hardwood pestle or pounder. Some mortars held a bushel of grain at a time, and a sweep-pole was attached to a branch of a tree so that its resistance, as the pounder was directed up and down, aided greatly in lifting the weighted end. The sweep was most effective if the tree was alive and all the other branches cut off. Two men often worked together at the plumping-mill, but it was not easy to produce good wheat flour in it, though it was satisfactory for cornmeal. Settlers sometimes boiled corn in lye from wood ashes, so that it would burst before being washed, dried, and pounded in the hominy-block.

The coarse brown bran-flour was sometimes put through a horsehair sieve or a piece of cloth, a suitable sifter being passed from family to family. Others winnowed the meal in the wind to remove the husks, and if wind was lacking a current of air was created by waving a blanket. But at best the meal was a poor substitute for white flour as we know it to-day, though undoubtedly producing healthful bread of a coarse type.

Many later settlers in remote regions made long journeys to the nearest mill to get their grain ground, or relied on a coffee mill or some makeshift. Some of the earliest farmers in Eldon Township ground their first grain between two grindstones turned by hand: 'The wheat was poured by hand through a hole in the upper stone. Between dark and bedtime enough would be ground to provide for the next day's needs.' But the 'precious stone flour' from the mill was highly valued in comparison with the *samp* or coarse bran-flour provided by hominy-block or hand-mill.

In 1819 two inhabitants of the Talbot Settlement invented a hand-mill which they called a *bragh*, and within a few months most of the settlers of the district had one. It consisted of granite stones fitted into a framework, the smaller stone on top, and a large bolt passing through the centre of both to fasten them together. A large eye at the top of the bolt made it possible to insert a handspike and carry the mill from place to place. One of its inventors, Peter McKellar, later erected a water-driven mill on Sixteen-Mile Creek, and ingeniously constructed most of its equipment as well.

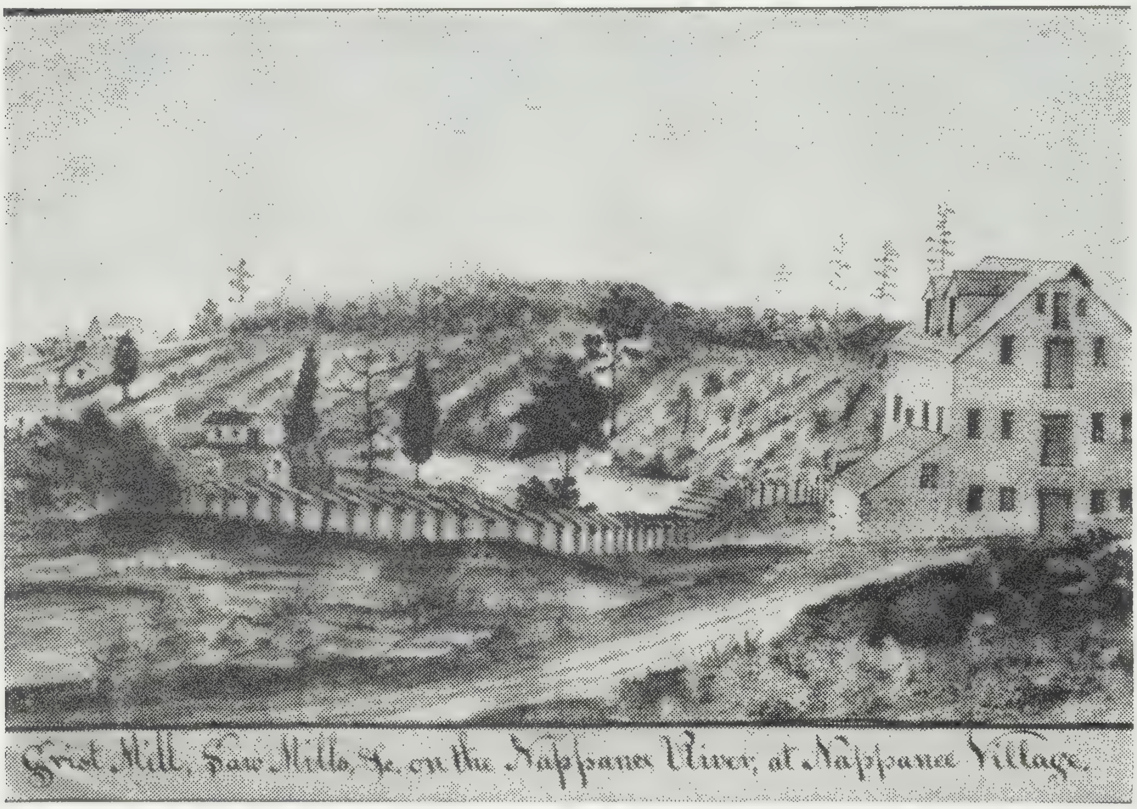
Grist mills were often the nucleus of thriving villages and towns as remote parts of Upper Canada were opened for settlement, for tavern, general store, and blacksmith shop soon

Currier & Ives print

George H. Durrie

THE OLD MILL IN WINTER

followed, and as the population increased school and church were provided. The grist mill erected by the government on the Apanee River in 1785 became the centre of the settlement of Napanee; Scott's Mills became Peterborough, Purdy's Mills grew into Lindsay, Darlington Mills, Bowmanville, and Shade's Mills, Galt; around Street's mill grew the village of Streetsville, Priest's mill in Glengarry County became Alexandria, and Ward's mills developed into the settlement of Wardsville, which was later named Smith's Falls.


Grist Mill, Saw Mills, &c. on the Nappanee River, at Nappanee Village.

Conservation Authorities, Ontario — Capt. Thomas Burrowes

NAPANEE ABOUT 1830

In flat regions, where water power was not available, other means were employed to grind grain. In 1833 Patrick Shirreff visited the French settlements along the Detroit River and observed windmills in general use. He also saw several propelled by oxen walking on an inclined plane, but considered them 'very poor machines'. Others were driven by oxen and horses attached to a large wheel, which moved horizontally a few inches from the ground; and he learned that a steam mill was about to be erected in Sandwich.

The palmy days of the small flour mill were the eighteen-thirties and -forties. In 1836 there were about six hundred in Upper Canada, and in 1854 only a few more. But steam mills were gradually increasing in number, and the ruins of many a small water mill tell a story of inability to keep pace with improvements, such as the turbine wheel, which gradually concentrated flour-milling into fewer and fewer hands. Similarly many a farmer's wife, instead of baking bread, now buys it daily from the baker, whose bread is probably made from flour ground—not from the farmer's own grain—but from the best hard wheat of the Canadian West.

(2) THE PREPARATION OF YEAST

Various types of *barm* or *rising* were in use among early settlers in Upper Canada. Those who lived on farms often grew hops. The right time to gather the cones is when the plant is full grown, with the bright yellow dust completely formed at the base of the blossoms and slightly glutinous to the touch. If left until over-ripe, much of the flavour leaves the hops. Mrs. Traill's hop-rising recipe was as follows:

> Boil down two large handfuls of hops in three quarts of water till the hops begin to sink to the bottom of the vessel, which they do after an hour's fast boiling. Put about a quart of flour in an earthen pan or any convenient vessel not too shallow, and strain the liquor, boiling off the fire, into the flour, stirring the batter quickly as you do so. The flour will thicken up like paste: stir it as smoothly as you can, then let it stand till blood warm; mix in a teacupful of the old stock of barm, and let the vessel stand covered up near the fire till it begins to show that fermentation has taken place. In summer you need only cover the jar or pan; it will rise in a few hours; but new barm is not so good as after it has worked for some days. A large earthen pitcher tied down from the air, or a stone jar with a cover, is best for keeping the rising in. The vessel should be well cleaned before refilling.

Another process for hop-rising consisted of boiling a pint of flour and the liquid from hops until it thickened, when a teaspoonful of salt was added and the mixture poured into a jar. A cupful of rising, and sometimes a little brown sugar, was added as it cooled. This type of barm would keep longer without souring. It was best to store all yeast in a cool cellar; but when yeast went sour a little baking soda at the time of use would restore it.

Potatoes, boiled with a little salt and stirred until of the consistency of gruel, were sometimes mixed with the flour. A spoonful of sugar, and two large spoonfuls of rising to start fermentation, were mixed into the liquid before it was strained into a bottle.

Sugar yeast was made by a similar method, but two pounds of soft sugar was used to one pound of flour. This barm would ferment of its own accord and was therefore of special use where no old yeast was available to start the process.

Some settlers made their yeast into cakes. The hop liquor was mixed with rye-meal, and yeast added when cool. Corn-meal was added to make a stiff dough, which was kneaded, rolled to an inch thickness, and cut into cakes, which were left to dry in the sun for two or three days. These leaven cakes were commonly hung up in bags and would keep several months.

Salt-rising, like sugar yeast, did not need any other yeast to start it working. It was prepared from salt, flour, and warm water or new milk, but if it was not carefully made it imparted an unpleasant flavour to the bread.

In towns many inhabitants preferred using brewers' or distillers' yeast, but its quality was not uniformly good. Such yeast sold for 1½d. a half pint, but as it was generally very bitter an equal quantity of warm water was often added to draw away some of the strength. This did not mix but was later poured off, and a little warm water and flour added to the yeast. Cured in this way the yeast was satisfactory for bread, though it did not keep as well as hop-rising. Sometimes grocers prepared yeast for sale in their shops, but as the years passed, most of these gave way before nationally-known brands, and it became unnecessary and unusual for people to make their own.

(3) BAKING BREAD

Bake-ovens were of several types. In Lower Canada an oven of stone or clay, erected on a stone foundation and having a steep roof of boards, was usually to be found a few yards from the kitchen door. A fire was built in the oven, and when it was thoroughly heated the coals were drawn out and the bread put in. Sometimes a small fee was paid for the use of the *seigneur's* oven, but most *habitants* had their own or there was one oven for the use of a group of neighbours. The loaves were usually of a weight of five or six pounds.

In Upper Canada the bake-oven was more frequently inside the house, at one side of the fireplace. A small door allowed the pans of bread to be placed in the oven. But such a luxury as a fireplace with a bake-oven was not common in a settler's first years. Instead the bake-oven was erected on a large stump, and over the stone or clay sides was placed a roof of bark or slabs. Hollowed buttonwood trees were also frequently used as ovens.

Many of the Loyalists used bake-kettles before they had a bake-oven. The kettle had an iron lid, and hot coals above and below baked the bread. Experience was necessary to produce good bread in the iron pots, for in many instances, while there was a brown crust on the outside, the interior of the loaf was still unbaked dough due to the presence of moisture which could not escape. An improvement was the reflector, an oblong box of bright tin enclosed on five sides of the six. The open side faced the fire when the reflector was laid on the hearth, the tins of dough inside it were raised slightly so that the heat would circulate, and the upper part of the reflector could be adjusted so that the housewife could inspect the contents. In some regions a cylindrical oven called a 'roasting kitchen' was in common use.

Bread as baked by pioneer settlers varied from indigestible 'dough cakes' to first-class loaves. John Langton's first bread consisted of 'round thinnish cakes of good dough put into the bottom of a frying pan', and he found these half-toasted and half-baked cakes quite palatable when mixed with pork fat. Other settlers baked a similar bread in pans with hot ashes above and below, or in improvised ovens of hot stones. This type of bread received no kneading, nor was there any rising through the use of barm or yeast. In Australia such unleavened, heavy breadcakes were called dampers, and some settlers who had heard of their use imitated them in Canada. Early settlers in Peterborough County kneaded and baked their bread in the following primitive manner:

> A portion of a trunk of a basswood tree about three feet long and two feet in diameter was split in two halves through the centre. One of these was hollowed out as smoothly as possible, to be used as a kneading-trough. About three pounds of flour, with enough water to wet it thoroughly, was put into this and well kneaded. It was then flattened out and placed in a round, long-handled pan, the front of which was held before the fire by means of a string attached to the end of the handle, while live coals were placed beneath and behind it.

But in wet weather the same settlers found it preferable to place lumps of dough right in the ashes and hot coals. If entirely covered, they baked without burning.

A good bread could be made without yeast of any kind. Mrs. Child's *The Frugal Housewife* gives a recipe which was used by many early settlers who had no yeast and did not know how to make it:

> Scald about two handfuls of Indian-meal, into which put a teaspoonful of salt and as much cold water as will reduce the mixture of meal to blood-heat; then stir in wheaten flour till it is as thick as hasty-pudding and set it before the fire to rise. In about half an hour it generally begins to thin and look watery on the top. Sprinkle in a little more flour, and mind and keep the pot turned from time to time, taking care not to let it be too near the fire or it will bake at the sides before it is risen. In about four hours it will rise and ferment, as if you had set it with hop-yeast; when it is light enough mix in as much flour as will make it into a soft dough; grease a pan, put in your loaf, and let it rise, covering it up warm and turning it so that the heat affects it equally; in less than an hour it will be ready for the oven; bake as soon as it is risen. Some bake in a Dutch-oven before the fire.

Satisfactory recipes for bread and innumerable types of cake and biscuits were speedily developed by the women as soon as flour, yeast, and the other ingredients were available. In many instances Indian meal (cornmeal) was mixed with wheat flour, while wheat bread varied in colour and texture from fine white to coarse dark brown according to the proportion of bran remaining in the flour. Mashed potatoes were also mixed with wheat flour by many settlers. Mrs. Catharine Traill gives the following recipe in her *Female Emigrant's Guide*:

> Wash and pare half a pail of potatoes, taking care to remove all dark specks; throw them into a vessel of clean water as you pare them, as they are apt to acquire a brownish colour which spoils the white and delicate appearance of the bread. Boil the potatoes till reduced to a pulp, bruising any lumps smooth with a wooden beetle or pounder; it will then have the consistency of thick gruel; when cool enough to bear your hands in it, stir in as much flour as will make the mixture the thickness of thick batter; add a good handful of salt and two cupfuls of your hop barm or any good rising that you may have. A deep, red earthen pot, or a wooden pail, will be a good vessel to contain your sponge. It is a wise precaution to stand your vessel in a pan, as it is apt to flow over. If set to rise over-night it will be risen time enough to work up in the morning early; in summer we seldom make this potato-bread, on account of the potatoes then not being so fit for the purpose, for while young they will not boil down

so smoothly; but from the month of August till May it may be made with great advantage. The quantity of sponge above will raise two large milk-dishes of flour, or about twenty pounds of flour. If you have a large kneading-trough you can mix the whole at once and knead it well and thoroughly; but if your trough be too small for convenience divide your sponge and make two masses of dough, working it very stiff on your board, scoring the top with a knife, and cover it up by the fire with a clean cloth; or you may make only half the quantity, using, of course, less potatoes and water. In about two hours, or may-be longer, you will have a light dough like a honey-comb to make into loaves. When baked take your bread out of the pan, wet the crust of your loaves over with clean water or milk, and wrap them in a clean cloth, setting them up on one side against a shelf till cold. This plan keeps the bread from becoming hard and dry. For lightness, sweetness, and economy this is the best bread I know, resembling really-good baker's bread in texture and look. I cordially recommend it to the attention of the Canadian housewife.

(4) PREPARING WILD RICE

Wild or Indian rice grows in large beds in quiet waters of a depth of from three to eight feet. Many shallow lakes with mud or sand bottom are almost filled with the rice plant, and to paddle even a canoe through them in July or August is not easy. As the rice reaches the surface its leaves lie for a time on the water, but as it gains strength it shoots several feet above, and in August bursts into flower.

September is the season of the rice harvest. As the plant withers, the grain ripens, and it is collected in a canoe, the heads being bent over the side of the boat by the paddle while

An early postcard

INDIANS GATHERING WILD RICE

a light stick in the other hand of the paddler strikes the grains into the boat. Among the Indians the squaws usually collected the rice.

When several bushels of rice had been gathered, the Indian built a hedge-like enclosure of pine or cedar branches.

> In the centre of this place [writes Catharine Traill] they drive in forked sticks in a square of several feet, across which they lay others, and on this rude frame they extend mats of bass or cedar for the manufacture of which the Indian women are renowned. They light a fire beneath this frame, and when reduced to hot, glowing coals, the rice is spread on the mats above the fire. The green enclosure is to keep the heat from escaping; the rice is kept stirred and turned with a wooden shovel or paddle, and after it is dried the husk is winnowed from it in large open baskets shaken in the wind. This is the mere drying process of the green rice.

The parched rice was then heated in pots over a slow fire, when it burst and showed the white floury part beneath the dark skin. It was then ready for use, and the Indians stored it in birch-bark baskets or sewed it up in mats. They frequently carried a supply with them on hunting expeditions, for a handful could be eaten dry from time to time, without a stop to prepare a meal. Settlers seldom harvested wild rice, for imported rice could be obtained cheap. Many of them purchased a supply from Indians, and found that when boiled or baked it was of a grayish-black colour with a rich and pleasing flavour.*

(5) MAKING STARCH

It was almost a maxim among early Canadian settlers never to buy what could be made in the home. The careful housekeeper consequently made her own starch. Corn starch, used in puddings and custards, was an American preparation which had to be purchased, but starch for clothes could be readily made. There were two main kinds, potato and bran.

In making potato starch white-skinned potatoes were grated on a rasp and stirred in a pan of cold water. The mass was then strained through a cloth, the pulp being squeezed until quite dry. When the liquid settled, a sediment was left at the bottom; and a second and third water replaced the first, each being in turn drained off. The starch at the bottom had then a slightly discoloured crust, but when this was removed the pure white starch was left. Before being placed in paper bags it was thoroughly dried in the sun. In addition to its general use for starching clothes, this starch, boiled in milk, formed a substitute for arrow-root for invalids and children.

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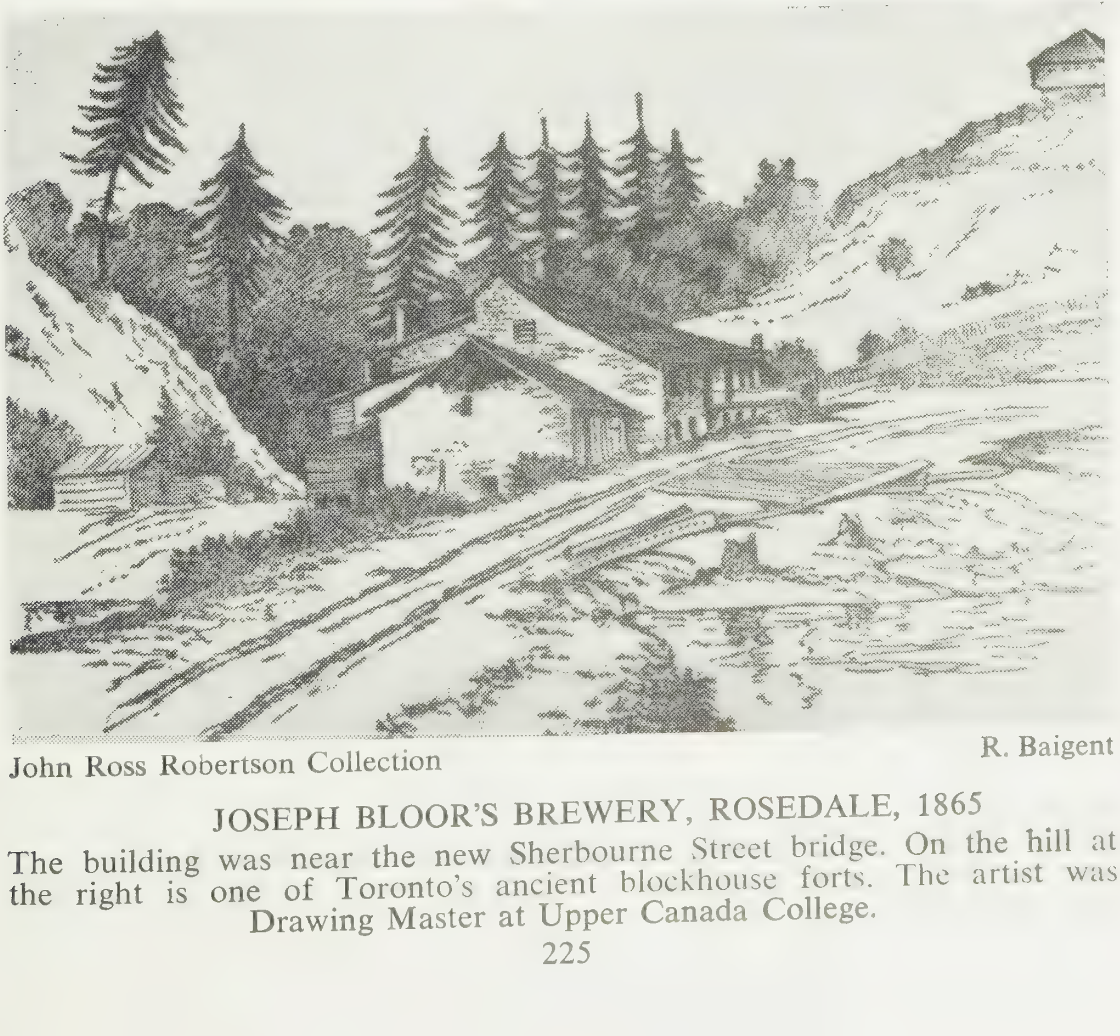
*Roast venison, partridge, or wild duck with wild cranberry jelly, and a dessert of wild rice, maple sugar and wild grape juice is a pioneer meal worth eating.

Bran starch was made similarly. The bran was steeped in water in the sun or a warm room until it began to ferment, which was apparent by the bubbles. In a week or two it soured, and after straining off the liquid the housewife squeezed the bran through coarse canvas. The liquor settled, was drained off, and two or three further waters were placed on it in turn, when, as in the case of potato starch, the discoloured starch on top was removed and the clear product left. If it was desired to blue the starch this was done by blueing the last water and stirring well, or else blueing the water in which the starch was eventually used. Sometimes the sour fermented water was used to brighten red and scarlet dyes, while the refuse bran was fed to cattle or hogs.

(6) DISTILLING AND BREWING

The distilling of whiskey was not a prominent domestic manufacture among Canadian pioneers, but was usually left to those who specialized in the business. There were frequently



John Ross Robertson Collection

R. Baigent

JOSEPH BLOOR'S BREWERY, ROSEDALE, 1865

The building was near the new Sherbourne Street bridge. On the hill at the right is one of Toronto's ancient blockhouse forts. The artist was Drawing Master at Upper Canada College.

several distilleries in a small settlement, and it was not unusual to operate them in conjunction with grist mills, for frosted or rusted grain and other poorer grades of wheat, corn, or rye, could be used in the manufacture of whiskey. In fact an early traveller compared the liquor to 'fire and brimstone', for he found that the worst of it was 'made of frosty potatoes, hemlock, pumpkins, and black mouldy rye'.

Early settlers could obtain whiskey from the distiller under much the same terms as cloth from the woollen mill or lumber from the sawmill. Joseph Pickering says that about three and a half gallons were made from a bushel of grain, and wrote in his diary: 'Sent 200 bushels of wheat to the "still", to have seven quarts of whiskey per bushel for it.'

John Scott of Brampton was locally famous because the mill-stones in his distillery operated vertically instead of horizontally. There was always a great deal of waste material from distilleries, and it was used to feed hogs. Philemon Wright, founder of Hull, notes that he had a shed 500 feet long, with 'troughs to receive the wash for the benefit of the cattle, hogs, etc.'

The brewing of beer from malted barley, hops, and water was similarly not a domestic manufacture in pioneer Canada. There were, however, home-brewed beers for the manufacture of which extensive equipment was not needed. Hops were extensively grown by many early farmers. 'Every one cultivates this plant,' says Mrs. Traill, 'on account of it being an indispensable ingredient in making barm for rising the household bread, besides shading and adorning their verandahs by its luxuriant foliage and graceful flowers.' She describes how various drinks were made from hops, beets, corn syrup, maple or birch sap, apples, and yeast, with the addition sometimes of spruce sprigs or ginger.

CHAPTER XIV

PREPARING FISH AND GAME

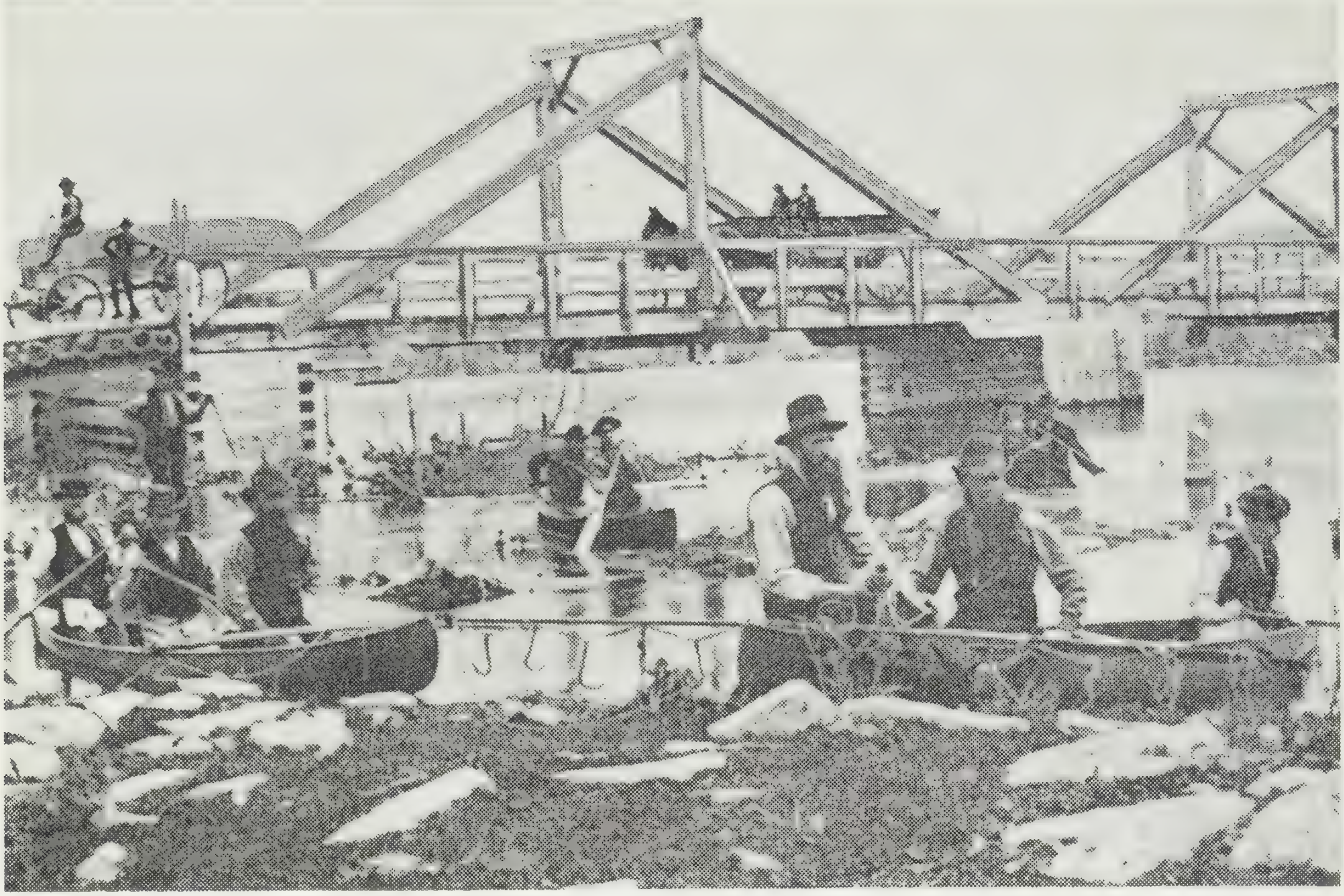
(1) FISH RECIPES

FISH were so plentiful in pioneer Canada that it is not surprising that there were numerous methods of cooking them. Besides the more usual frying, boiling, and steaming of fish, there were many recipes not now common. Sometimes soup was made by boiling small fish until they broke into pieces, and then straining the liquor through a colander. This was then made into soup by the addition of flour, bread crumbs, parsley, savory, onions, etc., with a little butter and tomato catsup and some cream or milk. Sometimes other fish, as well as the roes, were added while the soup was being prepared.

Bass or maskinonge were made into fish pie by boiling, removing all bones, and pounding the flesh fine. To it was added a pint of cream, a little butter rolled in flour, chopped parsley, vinegar, the yolks of two eggs beaten, and a tablespoonful of walnut, mushroom, or tomato catsup. Half an hour's baking produced an appetizing dish.

Various kinds of fish were potted after boiling. Between each layer was sprinkled salt, pepper, cloves, and allspice, and when the pot was full, the whole was covered with vinegar and baked in a slow oven overnight, or at least for several hours, a crust of dough serving to keep in the steam. After standing for several days, it made an excellent breakfast or supper dish.

Sometimes maskinonge or salmon were dried in the sun, salt being sprinkled over the flesh, which was turned each day. After two days, the salt was washed off and the fish was strung on a willow wand, hung up in the sun for several days, and then smoked. Red cedar bark and corn cobs were often used to provide the smudge, for they added greatly to the flavour. To prepare for the table the fish was soaked in warm water and boiled or fried.



Stereopticon view, courtesy Clara Benson

FISHING PARTIES, BURLEIGH FALLS, 1880

Courtesy Mrs. R. B. McWilliams

Thomas Workman

PERRY'S CREEK, 1895

Early called the Lost Channel, Perry's Creek is a secondary outlet of the waters of Lovesick Lake into Stoney Lake.

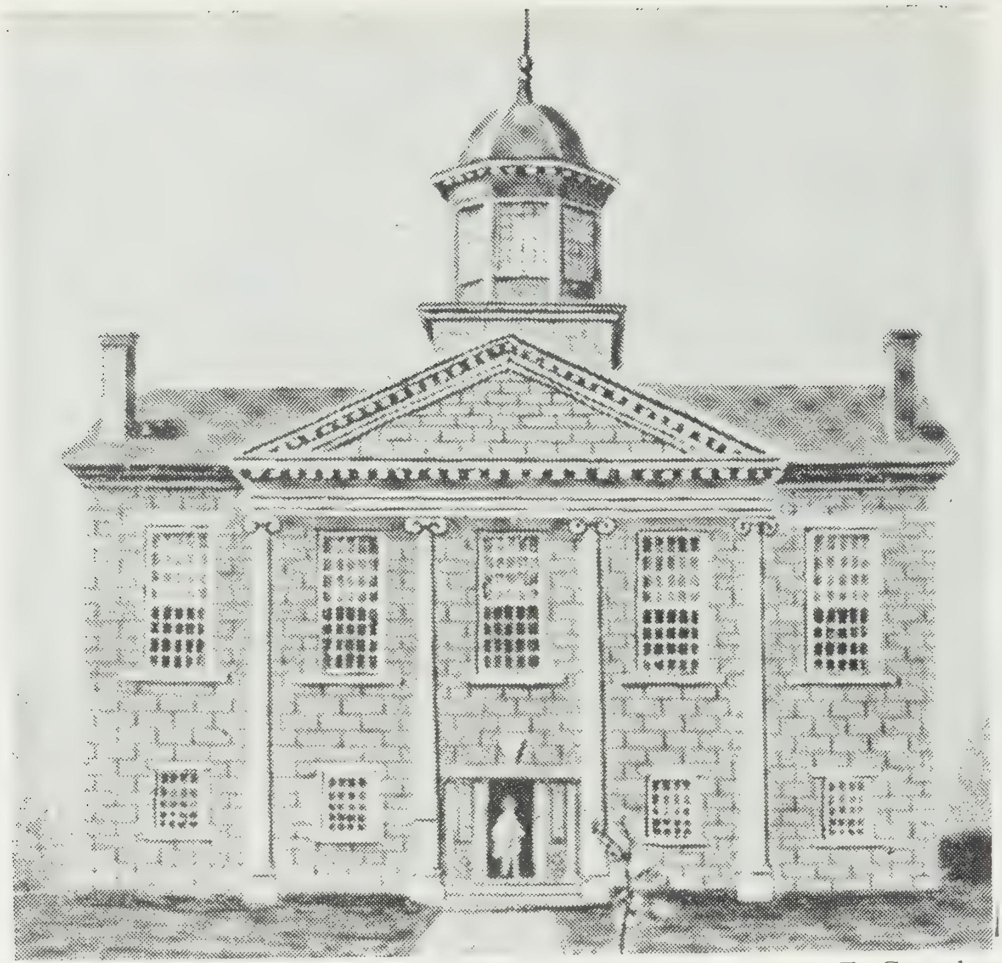
Canadian eels were of large size, and though the flesh was coarse, it was frequently eaten. Mrs. Catharine Traill recommended parboiling them first. The head, the tail, the backbone, and the oily fat along it were then removed. The fish was spread open, strewed with chopped parsley, savory, pepper, and salt, and rolled into a bolster. Bound and covered with a cloth, it was boiled in salt water for several hours. Mrs. Traill poured vinegar over it when cold, and served it in slices, garnished with parsley.

In winter, fish were usually speared through the ice. If a supply was to be kept through warm weather it was necessary to use salt as a preservative. John Langton used alternate layers of potatoes and fish, placing a layer of mashed boiled potatoes with plenty of salt and pepper in the bottom of a barrel. The fish—maskinonge in this instance—were then boiled, and at a certain stage all the flesh would fall from the bones if the fish was held up by the tail. Salt and pepper were again added, and the process repeated until the barrel was full of potatoes and fish. It was then headed up and left to freeze solid, and the contents would keep well in a cool place until early summer. When he desired it for food Langton fried this mixture in small round cakes. An ice-house made it possible to keep barrels of fish in a very satisfactory manner.

(2) DRESSING GAME

In pioneer days those settlers who did not shoot their own deer could readily obtain the meat from Indian hunters in exchange for salt pork, flour, or farm produce. The dressing of venison and other game did not vary greatly from the preparation of domestic animals. Venison was roasted, fried, and made into fricassees and pot-pies. Sometimes it was corned by rubbing with salt, or the hams were hung for three weeks in the smoke-house after much rubbing with a mixture of sugar, salt, and saltpetre. Venison soup was thickened with wild rice, while jerked venison was prepared by cutting the flesh in strips and drying in the open air.

Lumbermen and hunters often ate the flesh of muskrats, bears, porcupines, beavers, and even woodchucks (ground hogs), but settlers preferred black squirrels or Canadian hare. Black squirrels were considered very delicate food, while bear meat was like coarse beef, though the hams, if well cured,

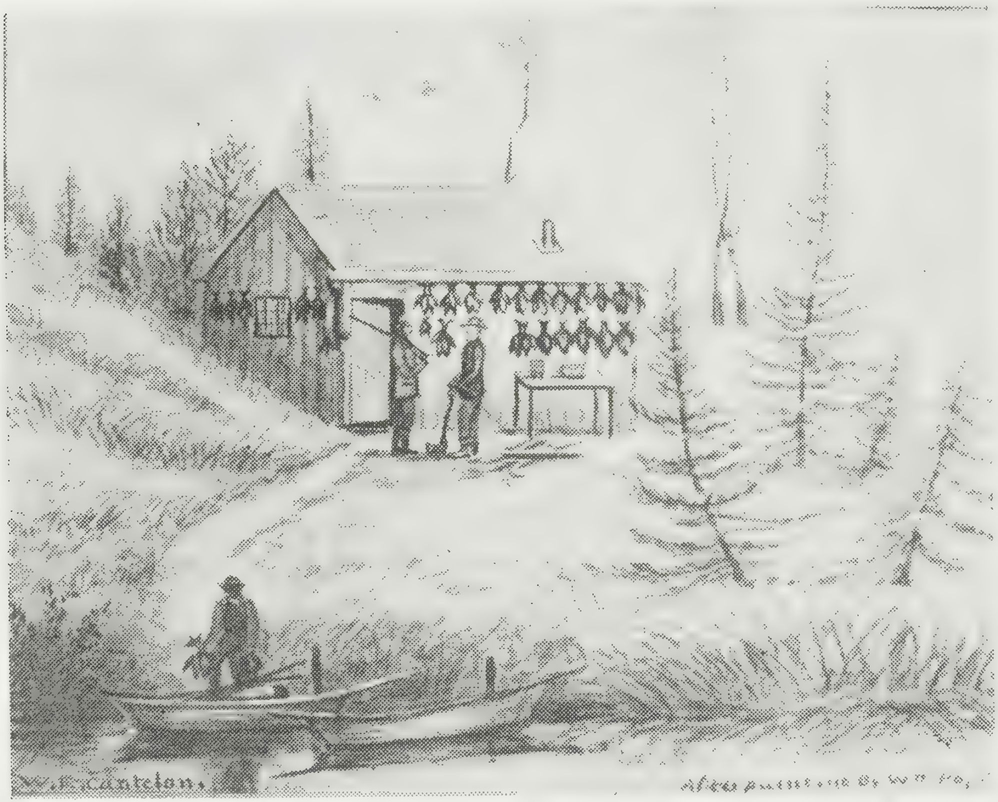


Eva Brook Donly Historical Museum W. E. Cantelon

NORFOLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE, SIMCOE, 1837-1863

The painting was based upon an early ambrotype.

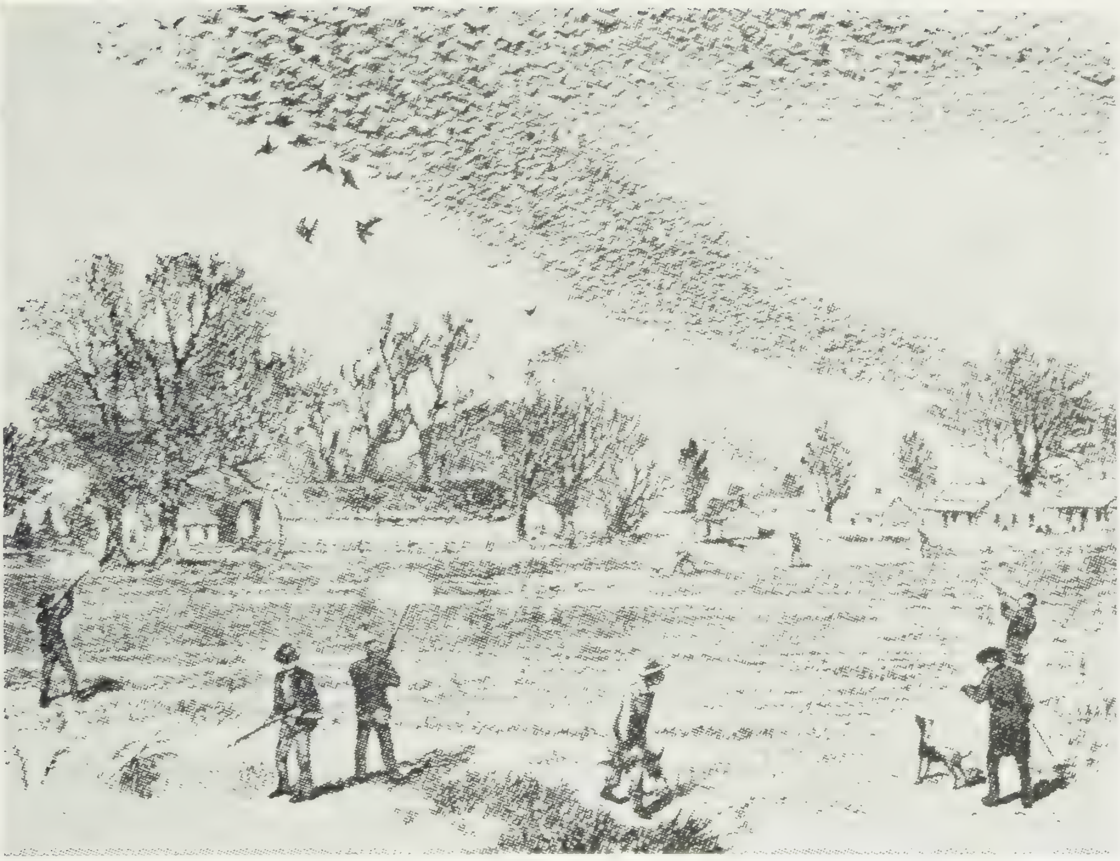
Edgar Cantelon could hardly get half a dollar for a painting in his lifetime, but Norfolk County's history is now greatly enriched by some 300 results of his enthusiasm and skill.


W.E. Cantelon.

Eva Brook Donly Historical Museum W. E. Cantelon

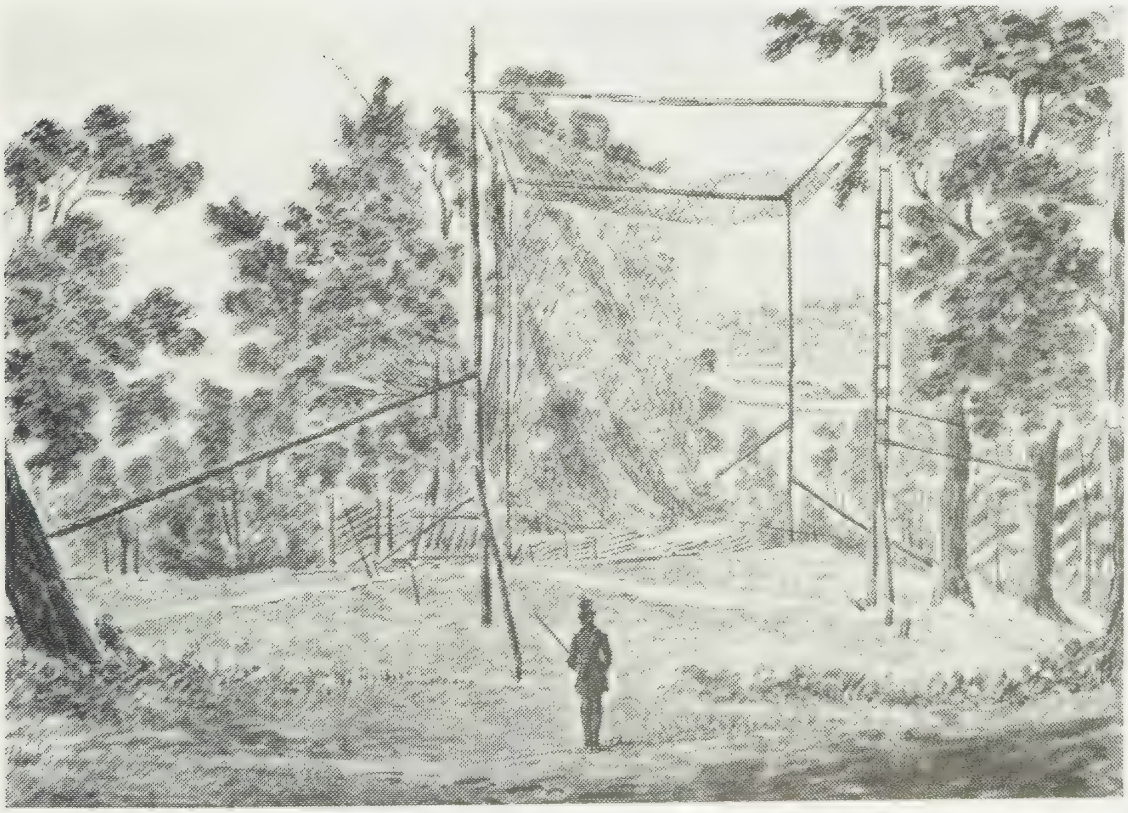
WILLIAM POPE'S SHOOTING LODGE, VITTORIA

Many of Pope's water-colours of birds and flowers are in the John Ross Robertson Collection, Toronto Public Library.



The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, 1875 Smith Bennett

SHOOTING WILD PIGEONS



Public Archives of Canada James Pattison Cockburn

'NET FOR CATCHING PIGEONS AT ST. ANNES', 1828 were excellent. Hares were roasted, fried, stewed or made into pies, but were not considered as well-flavoured as the English variety.

(3) WILD PIGEONS

Snipe, partridge, woodcock, and quail, ducks, geese, and wild turkeys were all readily obtained in many districts in the pioneer period, but of special interest is the wild pigeon, which was exceedingly plentiful in the spring and fall. Stories of huge flocks literally clouding the sky in the migration seasons are not exaggerations, and many a settler added variety to his food supply by shooting, netting or knocking them down in great numbers. They were found to be good cooked in almost any manner, but were best roasted or baked in pot-pies. The old-fashioned bake-kettle made a better pigeon pie than the stove oven. A good pie-crust lined the kettle, and the birds were placed inside, with a little butter and seasoning on the breast of each. A cupful of water and a half-inch crust over all completed the pie, which was baked by keeping hot embers underneath and on the lid and turning the bake-kettle from time to time.

The pigeons were fattest just after the wheat harvest, and some settlers were accustomed to salting them down in barrels, the breasts only being used. Packed in the ice-house they provided a delicacy for many weeks, while their feathers were used to fill mattresses. Stuffed specimens may be seen in museums, but the wild pigeon is now believed to be extinct.*

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*In a letter to the Toronto *Globe and Mail,* February 1, 1940, the Hon. Mr. Justice W. R. Riddell says: 'In my youth it was usual for millions—literally millions—of wild pigeons to pass over my father's farm in the Township of Hamilton in the spring for days at a time. I have more than once seen them break branches of trees by a great number of them lighting at once on the same limb, and I twice killed three by one shot. The last I saw—they had been gradually diminishing for years—were at Hastings in 1872; there I killed two by one shot.'

CHAPTER XV

FOOD PROCESSES AND RECIPES

(1) MAKING SAUERKRAUT

SETTLERS of varying nationalities had usually a fondness for prepared foods which, in their native land, had something of the characteristics of a national dish. The German food, sauerkraut, affords a prominent example. Apart from their customary use of this food in Germany, there was good reason for its use as a winter dish in Canada, for green vegetables, and fresh foods generally, were not obtainable.

Cabbage is the prime ingredient of sauerkraut. Having gathered the cabbages and trimmed off their outer leaves, the farmer proceeded to cut the rest up fine with knives or a spade. A common method was by the use of a home-made cabbage-cutter, with knives projecting slightly above a board. On this board was fastened a box without a bottom, raised above the knives by cleats at the sides. The board was placed over an open barrel, and the box filled with cabbage and pushed back and forth over the knives. As the shredded cabbage fell into the barrel a generous quantity of salt was sprinkled over each layer. The cabbage was pounded down closely, and boards surmounted by heavy weights covered the barrel when full.

After several weeks the sauerkraut was ready to use. When the barrel was opened, brine covered the sauerkraut and kept it from spoiling. Those whose stomachs were not used to strong food were inclined to refer to sauerkraut as 'rotten cabbage', but German settlers ate large quantities of it during the winter months.

(2) APPLE CIDER MAKING

Apple cider was a common drink in early Canada. In many districts, we are told, 'It was a universal custom to set a dish of apples and a pitcher of cider before everyone who came to the house.' Sour apples were used for cider, while sweet apples greatly aided in thickening the boiled syrup when apple sauce, apple butter, preserves, etc., were being made—the great source of apple pie, long a standard dessert.

The pioneer cider mill was a rather crude contrivance. It consisted of two cogged wooden cylinders about fourteen inches in diameter and double that in length; sometimes one was slightly longer than the other, and to its pivot was fastened a pole which a horse pulled while walking around a circular path, revolving the cylinder. The cylinders stood upright in a framework, and as they revolved they crushed the apples and shot them out on the opposite side.

Before the introduction of the screw press a cruder one was in general use. On a heavy beam with an upright at one end was placed a square box of hardwood slats. Another beam, with one end mortised to the upright, extended over the box and carried at its end a weight so arranged that by turning a wooden screw it could be lowered upon the apple pulp in the box.

Sometimes the press was as large as eight feet square, and round it was a deep groove to carry off the juice. In making what is called the cheese a thick layer of rye or wheat straw was spread on the floor of the press around the outer edge, and on this the pulp was spread a foot or more deep, sometimes in a cloth bag. The first layer of straw was then turned in carefully, and the process repeated several times until the press was full. Planks or wooden blocks were placed on top, and by the use of a wooden screw a great pressure could be exerted. Casks or vats caught the juice as it was squeezed out. Some barrels were set aside as rack cider for bees and other festive occasions, and this 'apple Jack' soon became hard and intoxicating. Other barrels of cider were destined to be used to boil down for preserves or apple butter, while cider vinegar was readily formed by exposure to the air for several months.

There were cider mills where those might be supplied who did not make it at home. Apples were plentiful, and the cider sold in 1830 for from 4s. 6d. to 9s. a barrel. In some districts you could take two barrels to the mill and receive one back full for the empty; and in others 1s. a barrel was charged for the use of the press, the farmer supplying his own apples, barrels, and labour.

(3) MAKING VINEGAR

Nowadays the vinegar one buys at the grocer's is usually malt, cider, or white wine, but in the pioneer period, vinegar was generally home-made. The sap of the birch tree, as well as that of the sugar maple, was found to make good vinegar. From three to five pails of sap was boiled down to one, the sap being best at the close of the season when it was poorest for sugar. While it was still blood-warm it was strained and a teacupful of rising or yeast added. The liquid was then set in the sun or near stove or fireplace to ferment. After it had worked for some time and had stood for several weeks it was ready for use.

By exposing apple cider to the air for several months, a good cider vinegar was made. A quick method of making vinegar was occasionally employed. A barrel of apple cider was laid on its side above a barrel of birch shavings. The cider was allowed to drip a drop at a time into the shavings, and its slow progress through them led to its oxidation from the air. From the spigot at the bottom of the barrel, it dripped after many hours—perhaps a whole day—into a third barrel. Incidentally extracting birch flavour from the shavings, the liquid was also immediately converted into vinegar in the process.

Just as cider vinegar was closely related to apple cider, so the recipe for beet vinegar followed that for beet beer, but the fermentation was allowed to go on much longer. This vinegar was noted for its fine colour. Another vinegar was made from red or white currants. They were usually strung, and then placed in an equal volume of water in a warm place to ferment for several days. Stirring from time to time prevented mould accumulating on the surface. To the juice which drained off and could be squeezed from the pulp was added two pounds of coarse sugar per gallon, and the cask was placed in a warm room. In six weeks' time a strong and fine-coloured vinegar was ready for use in pickling.

(4) PREPARATION OF DRUGS AND REMEDIES

Medical knowledge was comparatively primitive in the pioneer period, and qualified doctors were few. As a result there was a dependence upon natural remedies on the one hand, and at the same time upon quacks, who preyed upon the ignorant. Magic, charms, and miracle cures found many believers, especially among the poor, and herbalist healers, both men and women, practised their trade in every rural district.

Mere mention of the remedies for various diseases will indicate the extent of the belief in herbs as cure-alls. An infusion of bark was prescribed in large doses for fever patients. Seneca snake-root was believed to relieve fever, colds, and 'pains in the bones'; and combined with thimbleberry and blackberry roots, it was used to treat cancers. Wild horehound, sweet gale, and the leaves and roots of the strawberry were brewed as a remedy for ague, and burdock roots for indigestion; while alum root and crow's foot were thought to relieve dysentery. The Indian use of the bark of the sassafras or spice-wood tree was sometimes imitated: the chips of bark were boiled and the liquor had a fine aromatic flavour, reputed to be an effective purifier of the blood. Cherry bark was also a regulator of the blood, and the bloodroot or gentian root, dried and ground, was prescribed for rheumatism, and sometimes for certain affections of the nose.

Many considered that herbs must be gathered only when the phase of the moon was favourable. Roots, stems, leaves, berries, and seeds were commonly made into 'tea', and the more bitter the concoction, the more effective it was supposed to be. Wormwood tea, for example, was a general tonic when all else failed. Boneset tea and hemlock tea, made from the tips of the tree, were considered good remedies for colds, and yarrow tea for malaria; spearmint tea, spikenard tea, and tea from May-apple roots were used for colds, coughs, and sore throat; and catnip tea for children's ailments.

Methods and instruments were as primitive as the remedies. Bleeding, or letting blood, was supposed to effect an improvement in almost any disease, while protection from germs—even their existence—was almost unknown. Necessary operations were carried out while the patient was conscious, and often without the benefit of drugs to relieve pain. In rural districts there were even substitutes for surgical dressings. Crushed plantain leaves were considered effective as a poultice, while smartweed steeped in vinegar aided in reducing bruises. Many years were to elapse before expert medical attention was available to rural settlers, and even now it is insufficient in most regions.*

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*The most detailed account of early medical conditions is W. Perkins Bull, *From Medicine Man to Medical Man* (1934). It has particular reference to the County of Peel.

(5) SUBSTITUTES FOR TEA AND COFFEE

Besides the various 'teas' which have been described as remedies, there were a number of substitutes for tea and coffee, which many early settlers found too expensive for general use. The leaves of the wild plant New Jersey tea, or mountain sweet, supplied a common substitute for tea. The leaves were cured by drying in the sun or an oven, after which they were rolled. Lumbermen sometimes made use of this plant, as well as another, Labrador tea or marsh rosemary, whose leaves when boiled produced a liquid of strong resinous flavour. Tansy tea was also popular, while maidenhair fern, cherry bark, sage, thyme, and chocolate root provided drinks both pleasing and medicinal.

Raspberry vinegar, a drink popular among early settlers, is still considerably used in Canada. It is not, of course, a vinegar, but was made by letting raspberries stand twenty-four hours in vinegar, draining off the liquor, and repeating the process a second and third time, when the vinegar is sufficiently infused with raspberry juice. A pound of lump sugar was added for each pint of juice, the stone jar of liquor was placed in a pot of boiling water, and after ten minutes' boiling it was bottled. The flavour was best when the bottles had stood in a cool place for several months, and only a little was needed in a cup of water to make a palatable drink. It was found that the use of the poorer grades of sugar made an inferior, though cheaper, drink.

Substitutes for coffee were numerous, ranging from beans, peas, barley, and corn to dried potatoes, rye, wheat, and even toasted bread. Acorns were among the forest products occasionally boiled for 'coffee', while dandelion roots were prepared as follows by Mrs. Susanna Moodie:

> I carefully washed the roots quite clean, without depriving them of the fine brown skin which covers them and which contains the aromatic flavour which so nearly resembles coffee that it is difficult to distinguish it from it while roasting. I cut my roots into small pieces the size of a kidney-bean, and roasted them on an iron baking-pan in the stove-oven until they were as brown and crisp as coffee. I then ground and transferred a small cupful of the powder to the coffee-pot, pouring upon it scalding water and boiling it for a few minutes briskly over the fire. The result was beyond my expectations. The coffee proved excellent—far superior to the common coffee we procured at the stores.

(6) APPLE RECIPES

Apples were almost as characteristic of early Canada as they are today, for many of the first settlers planted orchards, and the apple-paring bee was a typical rural gathering. ‘Bushels and bushels of apples’, wrote a pioneer woman, ‘are pared, cored, and strung on Dutch thread by the young men and maidens, and the walls of the kitchen festooned round with the apples, where they hang till dry and shrivelled.’ If they were dipped in boiling water before hanging, the colour was preserved. Sometimes they were hung outside the house, in the sun and wind, or spread out on boards or trays, and when thoroughly dry stored away in bags.

Dried apples provided fruit all the year round, for a short stewing rendered them tender. The sour kinds needed a little sugar or molasses, but others were sweet enough as they were. Tarts, pies, apple preserve, and apple jelly were favourite dishes; in fact, apple pie became the standard dessert in town and country. Apple syrup, apple butter, and apple sauce were names for much the same product, and sometimes apple cider was boiled down in making them. Among less common apple recipes was that for apple rice, which was as follows:

> Wet a pudding-cloth; place it in a basin or colander, having previously well washed and picked a pound of rice, if your family be large; half the quantity will be sufficient if small; place some of the wetted rice so as to line the cloth in the mould all round, saving a handful to strew on the top; fill the hollow up with cored apples and a bit of lemon peel shred fine, or six cloves; throw on the remainder of the rice; tie the bag, not too tight, as the rice swells much; and boil a full hour, or longer if the pudding be large. Eaten with sugar, this is an excellent and very wholesome dish; acid apples are best, and are so softened by the rice as to need very little sugar to sweeten them.

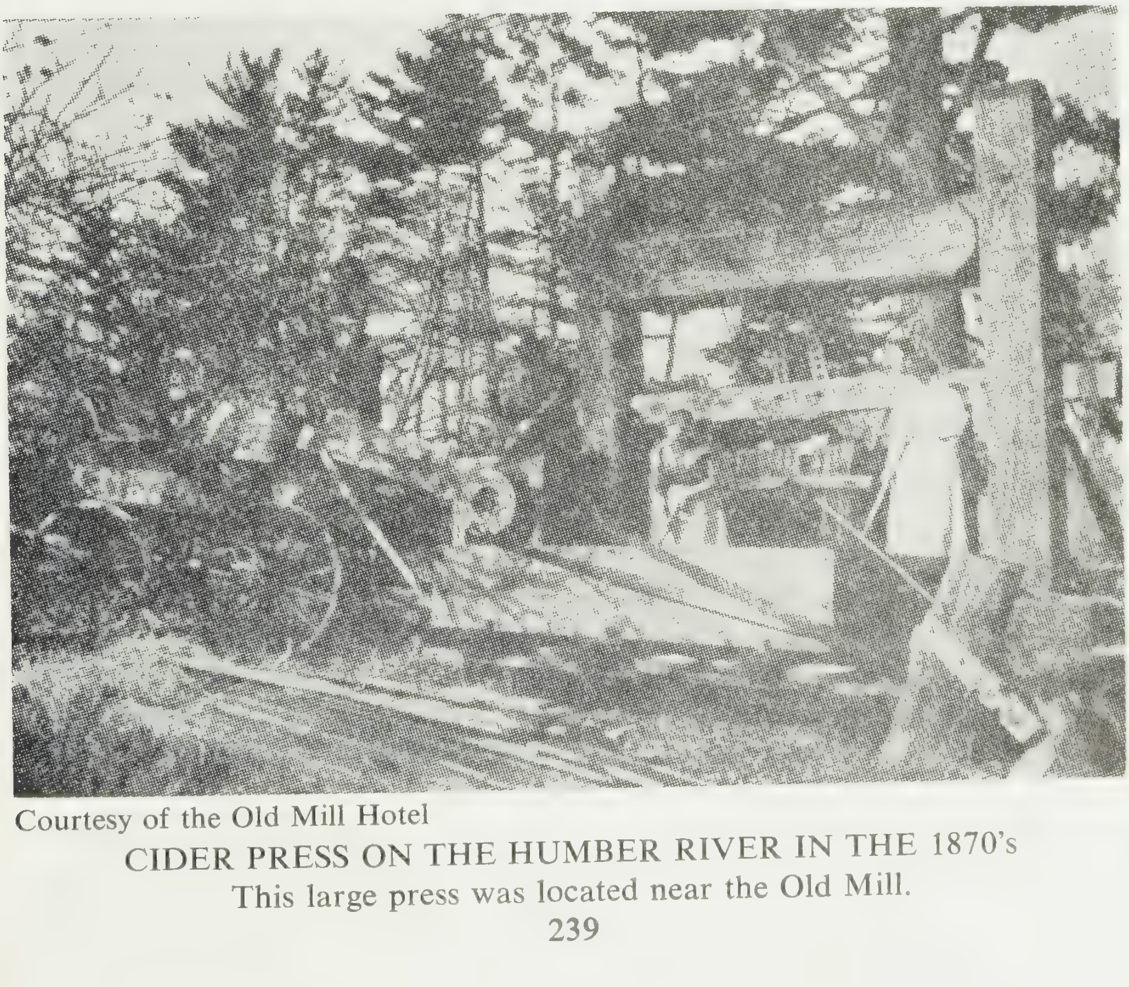
(7) PRESERVING SMALL FRUITS

Huckleberries, blueberries, raspberries, currants, cherries, bilberries, and other small fruits were often dried for future use. After boiling for half an hour, the fruit was spread out on pans and dried in the oven, under the stove, or outdoors in the sun and wind. When partially dried it was cut into squares and turned over, and as it dried further, white sugar was sprinkled over the fruit and it was pressed tightly and packed away in bags or boxes. These fruit cakes were prepared for use by stewing, which rendered them like preserves. A remedy for a sore throat or cold was made by pouring boiling water on one of the cakes, particularly if it was made of black currants. Many people used dried fruit of this type in place of the currants or raisins which could usually be purchased in the village store. Dried tomato and pumpkin were similarly packed in bags by many farmers.

High- and low-bush cranberries were readily accessible to early settlers, but were scarce even a century ago. The berries were sometimes kept a considerable time by being merely spread out in a dry room. Another method of preserving them consisted of putting them in jars or barrels of cold water. Cranberry sauce, served with venison and other roast meats, and cranberry jelly made from the high-bush fruit, were the chief products used in the home. Among other native fruits occasionally preserved was the mandrake or May-apple, which was boiled in syrup with ginger and cloves.

(8) MAKING GRAPE WINE

In the Niagara Peninsula particularly, the culture of peaches, grapes, and other fruits was important from the earliest years of settlement, but the making of native wines was not prominent



Courtesy of the Old Mill Hotel

CIDER PRESS ON THE HUMBER RIVER IN THE 1870's

This large press was located near the Old Mill.

until more than half a century had passed. At the time of Confederation the industry was being developed on a large scale at Grimsby, and there was an extensive vineyard and winery at Cooksville. The best red wine flowed from the presses by its own weight, while inferior white wine was obtained by pressure. Arched cellars, pure air, and controlled temperatures were important elements in the fermentation, and the phase of the moon had much to do with success in the processes. In 1866 and 1867 the Cooksville winery of Messrs. Cooke and de Courtney produced 90,000 gallons of wine.

A few settlers made a substitute drink from maple or birch sap, yeast, and sometimes a little sugar and split raisins, but such wine went sour quickly.

Some pioneers were content with wild grape juice, and Catharine Traill found that a fine jelly could be made. She gives the recipe, as well as adding a means of beautifying the landscape by transplanting grape vines:

> From the wild grape a fine jelly can be made by pressing the juice from the husks and seeds and boiling it with the proportion of sugar usual in making currant-jelly, *i.e.*, one pound of sugar to one pint of juice. An excellent home-made wine can also be manufactured from these grapes. They are not ripe till the middle of October and should not be gathered till the frost has softened them; from this circumstance, no doubt, the name of Frost-grape has been given to one species. The wild vine planted at the foot of some dead and unsightly tree will cover it with its luxuriant growth, and convert that which would otherwise have been an unseemly object into one of great ornament. I knew a gentleman who caused a small dead tree to be cut down and planted near a big oak stump in his garden, round which a young grape was twining: the vine soon ascended the dead tree, covering every branch and twig and forming a bower above the stump, and affording an abundant crop of fruit.

CHAPTER XVI

CATTLE AND THEIR BY-PRODUCTS

(1) HOG-KILLING

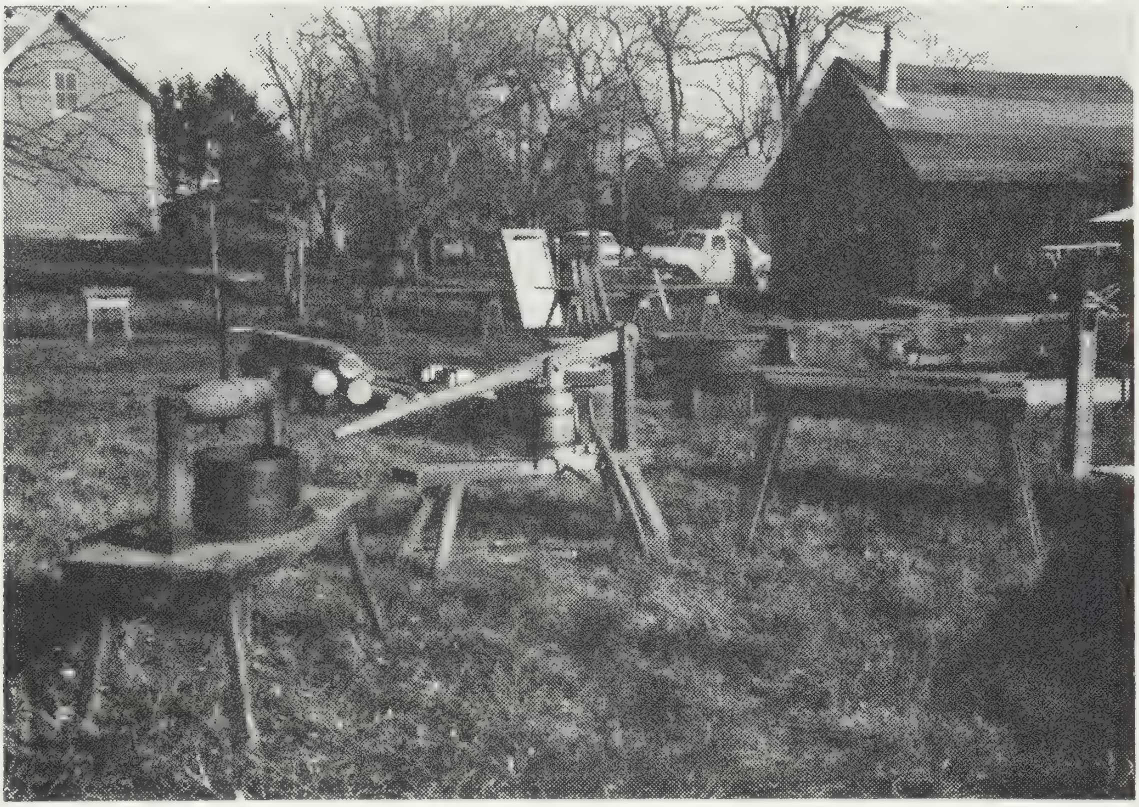
A HEAVY and disagreeable task on the pioneer farm was the slaughter of live stock. Two or three experienced men could kill and dress a dozen hogs in one day, but they were usually helped by the women and children. Among the operations outside the house was the removal of hair and bristles by hot water, while the housewife was soon busy inside getting everything ready for the making of sausages, lard, and other meat products.

(2) SALTING MEAT IN BARRELS

Within a few hours the carcass was cut up and stored away. The hams were first cut out, and then the forelegs in ham shape; the rest was cut in pieces chine fashion, and all the parts were rubbed and packed as tight as possible in salt in tubs, casks, or barrels, which were then filled up with strong brine and headed. Altogether the farmer prepared and stored a large supply of fine meats for his family's use, and probably several barrels of hams and other cuts for sale, for salt pork was in steady demand for the British garrisons in Canadian forts. Two hundred pounds was the usual weight of a barrel of pork. When it contained only the side pieces it was called mess pork; if hams and shoulders as well, prime mess, while all parts of the hog packed indiscriminately went by the name of prime pork. Pigs were often sent to market in a frozen state, without cutting up, and dried or smoked hams were frequently sold separately by the pound.

(3) PICKLING IN BRINE

Some people preferred packing their meat in a brine solution rather than dry-salting it. One recipe called for the following



Conservation Authorities, Ontario Snider Collection

PRESS-FILLING MACHINE AND MEAT GRINDER

ingredients for pickling 200 lbs. of meat: 14 lbs. salt, ½ lb. saltpetre, 4 lbs. coarse brown sugar or 2 qts. molasses, 1 pt. of beer or vinegar, and enough water to dissolve the salt. Pepper, allspice, and cloves were often added to give flavour to the meat. The liquor was brought to a boil and the scum removed. When cold it was poured over the hams, which had meanwhile been well rubbed. The meat remained in this pickle for six or eight weeks, being turned and basted every two or three days. The hams were then ready for the smoke-house. There were, of course, many variations in the brine; often a little alum or potash was added. Mrs. Traill gives the following directions for preparing bacon for smoking:

> Having taken off the hams from a side of pork, chop the rib-bones close to the back so as to remove the backbone the entire length of the side. With a sharp knife raise all the small long bones from the meat, and trim all rugged portions carefully away. Then mix a pound of coarse sugar to 2 oz. of saltpetre and 4 lb. of salt. Rub this well over the meat on all sides; two sides of bacon will not be too much for the above quantity. Cut them in two pieces and lay each piece above the other, the rind downward, and strew the remainder of the salt mixture over the last piece. A shallow wooden-trough or tray, with a hole and peg at the bottom, is the best to salt your bacon in; it should be placed a little sloping forward. Every second day draw off the liquor that runs from the meat into a vessel and care-

fully pour it over the meat again, having first shifted the bottom pieces to the top. In six weeks' time take them out; rub with bran, and lay on the rack to dry, or smoke them; this process makes excellent meat.

(4) MAKING LARD AND SAUSAGES

While the men were engaged in cutting and packing, the women were removing fat and trying (melting) it into lard. The kidney-fat of the hog was cut up small and boiled down over a slow fire. As it boiled, the oil was extracted, but when the process was almost complete the danger of burning was greatest. The oil was then strained off into stone jars and covered. Suet was rendered at the same time.

The liver was also cooked and liver-wurst made, while head-cheese and pickled souse were prepared after soaking the meat around the head and feet and chopping it fine.

Sausage-making was another process frequently completed the same day. Parts of the entrails provided a covering for chopped and flavoured meat, for early sausages were more like meat cakes than the modern sausage. Cotton bags were also used as casing to hold the meat.

(5) MAKING GELATINE

Many early Canadian settlers made their own gelatine, which was formed by treating ground bone and cartilage with boiling water. When heated, gelatine is a liquid, but when cool it is a jelly, so it is used to harden meat dishes, desserts, etc. It is made from much the same materials and in much the same fashion as glue, but with greater care in the selection and cleaning of the ingredients. As the slaughtering of cattle became a specialized industry gelatine became one of its natural by-products.

(6) SMOKING MEAT

Many settlers erected a smoke-house to enable them to cure their own meat in the spring. The hams and beef which had been salted down in casks or tubs were removed from the brine, washed, and hung in the smoke-house, which was a wooden structure. If the farmer had an outside bake-oven the smoke-house was near by. Its wooden walls were covered with grease, and the smudge for smoking was best obtained by burning beech, birch, hickory, maple, or corn cobs. Beechwood creosote and other oils cured, preserved, and flavoured the meat. In later years many farmers had improved smoke-houses of brick or stone. Sometimes the meat was smoked for only a few days, but others made a practice of keeping it in the smoke-house for six weeks or more. The hams, sewn in linen or cotton bags, would then keep for months, even through summer heat.

A coating of whitewash over the cloth covering of the bags aided in keeping flies from the meat, but weevils sometimes penetrated and laid their eggs in the skin and joints. As a result, hairy worms were soon destroying the meat. Immersion in boiling water, rubbing with bran or sawdust, and packing in wood ashes or oats usually restored the meat and permanently rid it of the weevils. As a preservative, charcoal was often packed in the barrels with the hams, and it was also used to restore tainted meat; a pint of the drippings from the stove-pipe joints was sometimes added to the brine for the same purpose. Cedar bark burned in barrels acted as a purifier when the brine had stood in them too long.

(7) CANDLE-MAKING

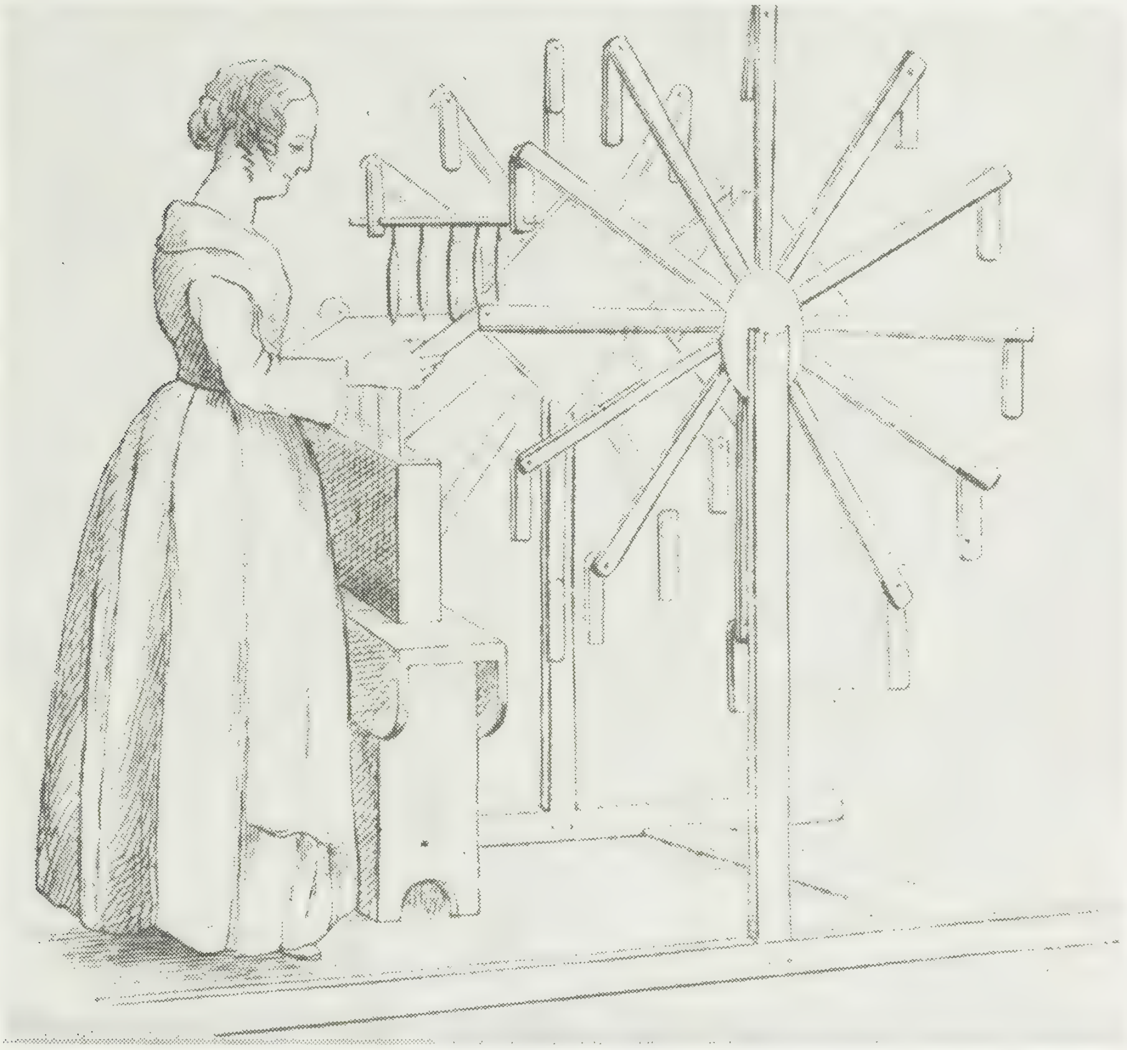
Although candles were not difficult to make, they were often scarce, especially among 'backwoods' settlers.

> One was lighted for supper [says a farmer] but it was put out immediately after the meal; and we had to sit at the light of the fire, which we made as bright as possible by a supply of resinous pine. . . . Some lard in a saucer, with a piece of rag for a wick, was one of our plans, in addition to the pine, when we wished to see our way to our beds.

In some districts this substitute of twisted rag was called a *witch*. At Johnson's Inn, near the present city of Barrie, a traveller in 1823 was informed by the landlady that she had no candles. But she quickly ran a thick cotton thread down a candle-mould, filled it with melted lard, sank it deep in the lake for fifteen minutes, and provided for his use what she called a 'country-made lamp'.

Many settlers used torches of pine knots or rushes, particularly to light their way through the woods. On that account fat pine was called 'candle wood', and was stored up for winter use. The knots gave a fair light, but tar dripped from them and made the air smoky. Similarly the dish of fat had its disadvantages, for the light was poor, the odour unpleasant, and soot was scattered about as a result of its use.

There were two general types of candles—tallow dips and mould candles. The use of moulds was less arduous work and produced more regular candles, but many found the dips more durable. The season for candle-making was autumn, when tallow was rendered down after the killing of beef and mutton. Often the tallow, or hard fat, was saved over a period of several months, so that a large batch could be made at one time. Tallow was sometimes melted in a large pot of boiling water, in the proportion of one-third tallow and two-thirds water. The tallow rose to the top and was well strained through flannel over a colander. Other settlers used only a tablespoon or so of water to prevent the fat burning to the bottom of the pot. Small pieces of fat were thrown in and boiled over a slow fire until all the fat was 'tried down'. It was stirred from time to time with a



Courtesy of the Langton family — Anne Langton

CANDLE-MAKING MACHINE

stick, for a metal spoon soon got too hot to hold. The scraps left after the tallow was strained were not wasted but set aside for soap grease.

The pot of tallow was placed on the floor between two chairs, a foot and a half apart. Two long poles were laid over the backs of the chairs, and on them were placed every few inches the candle rods, which were about twenty inches long and half an inch in diameter; on each of these, six pieces of coarse cotton wick some nine or ten inches long were placed at equal intervals, and a year's supply of candles might be made on fifty rods.

Two kettles were often used for the tallow, one being on the stove all the time so that the temperature was just right for the dipping, which consisted of putting each rod with its six wicks into the liquid tallow for the right number of seconds and placing it back on the poles. When all the wicks had been dipped the process began again, for many dippings were needed to make the candles the required size. If they remained too long in the tallow, or the time between dippings was not right, the candles would crack and be otherwise unsatisfactory. With two kettles one man could make two hundred candles in a day. Cool air was essential to harden the tallow between dippings, and the small boys of the family were often given the unpleasant work of holding the dips outside in the cold while other workers were dipping inside.

The better candle-makers used moulds. These were suspended from a small frame, and the wick was drawn through the bottom of the tube and threaded through the small pointed end which formed the top of the candle. To thread the wick well was a skill in itself. A double length of wick, with a little over for tying, was measured off. Several slender sticks like skewers were in readiness to support the wick, which was slipped through the bottom of the mould loop uppermost. When all the wicks were run, the sticks were slipped through the loops at the top and made even, and then the ends of the wick at the bottom of the mould were tied tightly. The sticks had to be perfectly straight or the wick would not be in the middle of the candle. Sometimes a bar was used above the mould in place of the sticks, all the wicks being fastened tightly to it.

A metal jug with a spout was best used to pour the hot tallow into the moulds. As the tallow cooled it shrunk, and more was poured in to fill up the mould. Since they had to harden all at once, instead of in layers as in the case of the dips, mould candles were not always as satisfactory. But if the tallow was of good quality the knot was cut off at the bottom and the candle readily drawn out of the mould by the stick. Sometimes it was necessary to warm the moulds slightly, or even to pour boiling water around them to release the candles. They were immediately packed away in a cool place where mice could not get at them.

The snuff, or charred wick of the candle, was generally removed by the thumb and forefinger. Sometimes this excrescence was called the *thief,* and the more careless among the menfolk merely threw it on the floor. But the greater gentility of housewives demanded something better, so the candle-snuffer was shortly introduced. With this was a snuffer-box for the charred wick, and even the farmer who had been continually scolded for not making use of it was constrained to admit: 'That's a dandy good rig!'

The economical housewife melted down and strained all drippings or ends of candles, or else threw them in with the soap grease. Lard alone was too soft to make candles, but it was sometimes mixed one part to three with beef or mutton suet. It was possible to make a clear and firm candle from melted lard by the addition of one ounce of nitric acid and a

John Ross Robertson Collection

FREELAND'S SOAP AND CANDLE FACTORY, TORONTO

Located on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street, 1832-65.

little beeswax to each eight pounds of lard, but very few settlers knew of this recipe, nor were chemicals generally accessible. Some candle-makers steeped the wick in a strong solution of saltpetre before putting it in the moulds, and this was found to brighten the flame and lessen the odour.

In later years it became usual for men to make a business of candle-making, and they would go from house to house with candle-moulds and make the winter's supply from tallow supplied by the farmer. In villages and towns there was usually at least one chandler, and candles were made and sold at his factory. Near the Atlantic coast some settlers had spermaceti (whale-oil) candles, which were much better than tallow. Sperm-oil lamps were in use in the homes of the well-to-do in Canadian towns. Handsome globe lamps burning melted lard were a substitute which could be used at half the expense, but they were not easy to light or keep clean. Tinsmiths sold portable tin lamps using lard for 1s. 6d., but candles were not rendered out-of-date until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when coal-oil lamps of pewter or glass, which were introduced in the 'fifties, became common. A few large towns had gas plants in the eighteen-forties and -fifties, but not until the 'eighties and 'nineties did electric arc lights illuminate streets, public buildings, and large stores. Today candles have only an occasional, but often a decorative, use in Canada.

CHAPTER XVII

DAIRY PRODUCTS

(1) BUTTER-MAKING

THE quality of butter depends on the feed of the cattle, the proper treatment of the milk, and the skill of the butter-maker. Many pioneer settlers had defective feed for their cattle and little or no equipment for the preparation of dairy products; in fact, milk was often scarce, even among farmers, and lard and grease frequently served as butter. Cleanliness and fresh air are essentials in dairies at all times, while coolness in summer and warmth in winter are almost as indispensable. The best dairies of the pioneer period had stone foundations, and sometimes the walls were made of upright squared cedar posts, with latticed and shuttered windows. Frequently they were built near a running stream or spring.

Pans of thick glass were in general use, while there were others lined with zinc or 'iron stone', a type of enamel. Wooden trays four inches deep, with peg holes for letting off the milk beneath, were early used, but the difficulty of keeping them perfectly clean led to their being replaced by other types. Earthenware or stone jars were generally considered the best for storing cream.

Churns were of great variety, and many a primitive makeshift served the purpose. Four short planks nailed together made the first churn on one farm, and the housewife said that she made 'as good butter in that churn as any I ever made in my life, but I needed to watch the seams carefully'. The principle was the same in all churns, the cream being pounded and mixed by a plunger until butter was formed. One of the older types was the upright churn, worked with the staff and cross-dash or paddle, but a great deal of labour was needed to operate it. The box churn with sloped sides left no sharp angles and corners to keep clean; the sides had dashers, and another was attached to the beam of the handle, which could be unscrewed when the buttermilk was drawn off through a plug-hole in the bottom. Some churns were worked with an iron wheel turned by a winch. The barrel-churn, with its rotary dasher, was simple and effective, and enabled the washing of butter before its removal. Whatever the type of churn, the scalding of the cream* just before churning was found advantageous, though a common alternative was pouring hot water into the cream, which made the butter white, greasy, and generally inferior. Frozen cream made frothy butter, or none at all; while in hot weather the churn was often cooled by immersion in cold water, either before or during the churning.

When the butter had been churned, it was well washed with cold water to remove as much of the buttermilk as possible, and it was then salted to suit the taste; during the process it was well worked by hand. The butter was then packed in crocks or stone jars, some makers adding two and one-half pounds of salt, six ounces of saltpetre, and a half pound of fine sugar to each thirty-two pounds of butter; and brine having been poured over it to a depth of two inches, the cover was pressed down tightly over a white cloth. So packed, the butter would keep for two years. When the cows had access to turnips or to wild leeks, a little saltpetre dissolved in the cream removed some of the objectionable flavour in the butter, though many settlers used such milk only to feed their calves. Many a storekeeper had to throw out 'turnipy' butter taken in trade in a day when merchants commonly took all of a farmer's butter and eggs.

While cheese was early made in co-operative factories in Upper Canada, it is only in comparatively modern times that *creameries* have partially superseded the individual buttermaker.

(2) CHEESEMAKING

Early settlers frequently made their own cheese, though the process was a laborious one. Making the rennet was the first step. The maw or first stomach of a sucking calf was always used for this purpose, though the stomachs of other milk-consuming animals, such as the lamb, kid, or sucking pig, will also curdle milk. Emptied of all curd and slime, the maw is carefully turned, washed, and placed in a brine of salt and cold water for twelve hours. It is then rubbed with salt and stretched on a flexible stick by bending it and holding both ends in one hand. Over this the bag is drawn and tied at the open end, near the ends of the stick, whereupon it is hung up in the sun or in the house to dry and harden. Then the stick is taken out, and the rennet bag is hung up in a cool place in a paper bag; some people placed it in a crock of brine, closely covered, while others filled it with salt before hanging it up.

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*Scald cream used to be common enough at farmers' markets, but unfortunately it is now a rare delicacy.

The rennet might be used in a few weeks, but some considered it best to keep it a year. Even those who did not make cheese preserved the rennet and used it to make sweet curds and whey to be eaten at dinner or supper with fresh fruit. A dessert spoonful of the rennet would set a dishful of milk of the proper temperature, and pioneer children were as fond of it as those of modern times are of junket, which is set by a powder corresponding to the rennet.

A solution of the rennet, perhaps half a cupful for a good-sized domestic cheese, was stirred in to curdle the milk. In twenty minutes or half an hour the curd was formed and separated from the whey. With a saucer, wooden dish, or wooden cheeseknife, the curd was cut across in several directions and the whey rose between the gashes. Usually a cheese basket—a loose square or round receptacle without a handle—was used to break up the curds formed by the souring and curdling of the milk. It was set on a frame called a cheese ladder, which was placed across the tubful of curds. A thin cloth was laid in the basket, with the edges hanging over the sides, and as the curd was ladled into the basket, the cloth was gently pressed to squeeze out the whey, which was drained off, leaving only the curds.

The curds were then put back in the vat, usually in a cloth, and cut up fine. A little salt was mixed through for seasoning, the cloth was folded over, and the cheese placed in a press under low pressure at first. In sixteen hours the cheese was sometimes removed to a tray and salted again, or it was laid in brine for several hours. A linen cloth to bind it together and prevent bulging or breaking was usually placed around the cheese at this time.

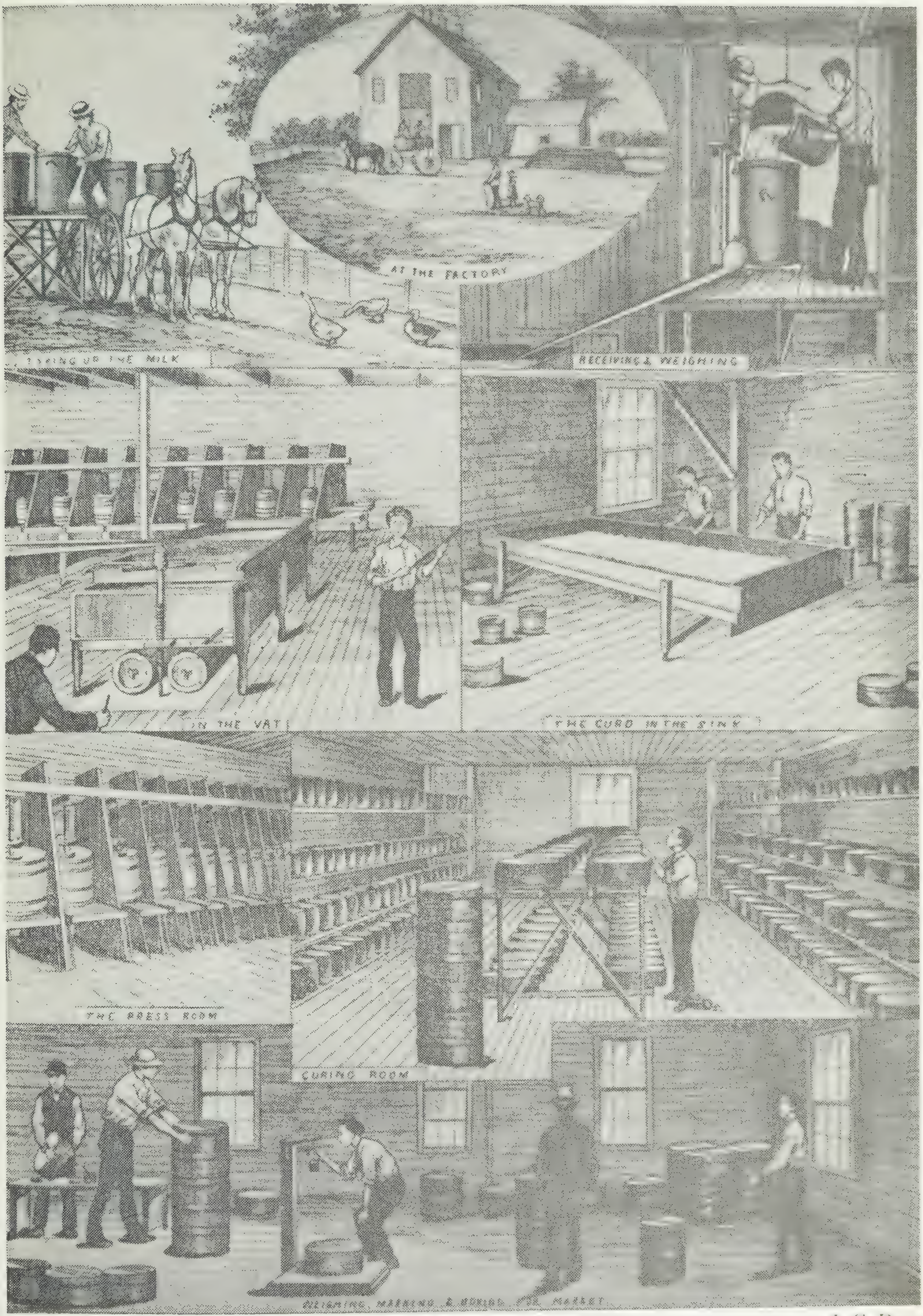
The first cheese presses were generally clumsy, with a long lever and great stone weights which had to be lifted frequently as the cheese was periodically rubbed during the drying and curing. Sometimes a small self-pressing cheese mould was used in the home. It consisted of a thin cylinder about a foot deep and eight inches in diameter. All over its surface, at intervals of two inches, it was perforated with holes, and a movable lid fitted on either end. After the curd was fully set it was put in the cylinder, any remaining whey squeezing readily through the holes without other pressure. Every hour or two for a couple of days the mould was turned upside down, when the cheese was firm enough to turn out on the salting tray. Sometimes a wide wooden hoop was then put around it until it was time to remove it to the shelf for drying. Linen binders were used to keep it in shape, and perhaps a coat of whitewash was brushed on the rind to keep flies away.

To make cheese on a large scale was at first very heavy work, with little in the way of mechanical appliances to lessen the lifting. Screw presses were later introduced, and cheese ladders held the large cheeses as they were turned, rubbed, and salted, for the flavour became increasingly rich as the cheese ripened under careful supervision.

Housewives developed methods of cheese-making which suited a small supply of milk and a somewhat makeshift equipment. 'Bush cheese' was a type made by combining the night's milk with the morning's, bringing the whole supply to the heat of new milk; then the rennet was stirred in and the curds drained from the whey and wrapped in several thicknesses of cloth to prevent drying out. The next day's milk was similarly treated, and if the farmer had only one or two cows, perhaps the following day's as well. Then all the curd was put together and well mixed, salted slightly, and pressed. Some settlers made their first cheese with nc other press than a board and heavy stones.

A richer cheese resulted from the mixing of the milk and cream of the night before with the new morning's milk, in imitation of the method used in Cheshire. A little flour sprinkled between the layers of curd made a still finer cheese, known as 'blue moulded'. Sometimes a pinch of saffron, steeped in warm water, gave a richer colour to cheese. 'Potato cheese' was made by mixing mashed potatoes with the curd. A pioneer cream cheese was made by the following recipe:

> Take one quart of rich cream, when well soured; put it in a linen cloth and tie it as close as you can, as you would a batter-pudding; hang it upon a hook, with a pan below it, to drain for two days; then turn it into another clean cloth and let it drain for another two



Canadian Illustrated News J. C. Dyer

CHEESE-MAKING IN ONTARIO, 1876

days, till it becomes solid; then lay it on a clean fine cloth spread on a plate; fold the cloth neatly over on each side and turn it over in the cloth on the plate; lay another smaller plate over it, turning every six hours; sprinkle a little fine pounded salt, and lay vine leaves over and under to ripen it; it is fit to eat in a few days, when slightly coated.

German settlers made other types of cheese from their sour milk. Schmier kase is made from scalded thick sour milk. The heat separates the curds from the whey, and a sour curd cheese was the result when the whey drained out of a cloth bag. Cream was sometimes added when the cheese was ready to eat. Hand kase, or ball cheese, was prepared similarly, but was seasoned with salt and butter and rolled by hand into balls before being laid away to ripen. Pot cheese was seasoned curds packed away in a crock in a warm place, and was noted for its strong odour.

Cheese is best made on a large scale, and cheese factories, to which the farmers of a district brought their milk, were among the earliest to develop in place of home manufacture. Most of them were co-operative in management, and profits were apportioned among the members. A typical early factory

Sigmund Samuel Canadiana Gallery — Major-General James P. Cockburn

'QUEBEC FROM POINT LEVI'

These volumes are enriched by numerous paintings by James Pattison Cockburn. 'Colonel Cockburn', wrote Thomas Hamilton in 1832, 'is an accomplished artist, with a delicate perception and fine feeling of the beauties of nature.' He is shown sketching in this picture. The Public Archives, Ottawa, lists him as 'Sir James', but he was never knighted.

stood on a hillside in Cayuga in 1867. The basement was entirely open on one side, and there the cheese was made, after which it was cured in the floors above. The farmers brought their milk morning and night, and after its weight was recorded it was carried by conductors to the vats, where, if it was the evening milk, it was kept cool by spring water continually flowing in a metal chamber under and around it.

In the morning a fire in a furnace beneath brought the water to a temperature of 85°, when the rennet was put in and the milk allowed to stand forty minutes. The mass was then considerably hardened and was cut up, standing some fifteen minutes under a temperature of 96°. The whey rose and was drawn off by a syphon, and the curd was constantly stirred while it was being scalded. The curd then settled and was dipped into a cooler, which was wheeled into the press-room after the curd was thoroughly cooled, washed, drained, and salted, about three pounds of salt being used for each 1000 pounds of milk.

The curd was then put into the hoops, under pressure of a screw, and after half an hour the cheeses were taken out and turned. When they had stood in the presses for twenty hours longer they were conveyed to the drying and curing room, where they were continually rubbed and turned. From twenty to thirty cheeses daily were prepared over a period of some eight months each year, and the cheeses, weighing about sixty-five pounds each, were ready for market in from thirty to fifty days.

Modern cheese factories use steam to heat the milk and to turn the large paddles which mix the curds and whey* for about two hours. Colouring matter, 1½ ozs. to 1000 lbs. of milk, is usually added to the milk before the rennet. The rennet solution is now made in chemical laboratories, sometimes being imported from Germany. The proportion of rennet changes with the season, type of milk, etc., varying from 2 ozs. to 4 ozs. per 1000 lbs. In general it takes twelve pounds of milk to make a pound of cheese. It may be used ten days after making but is known as new cheese for several months. Cheese becomes richer as it ages, and consequently brings a higher price; sometimes it is stored for from seven to ten years.

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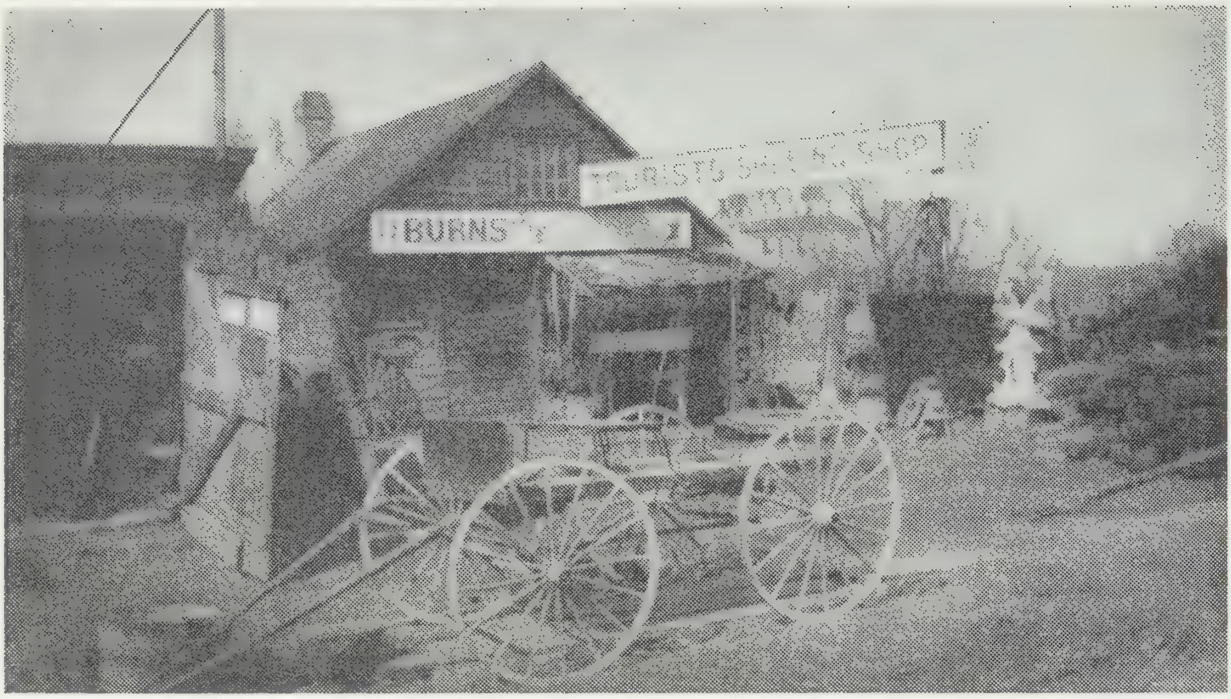
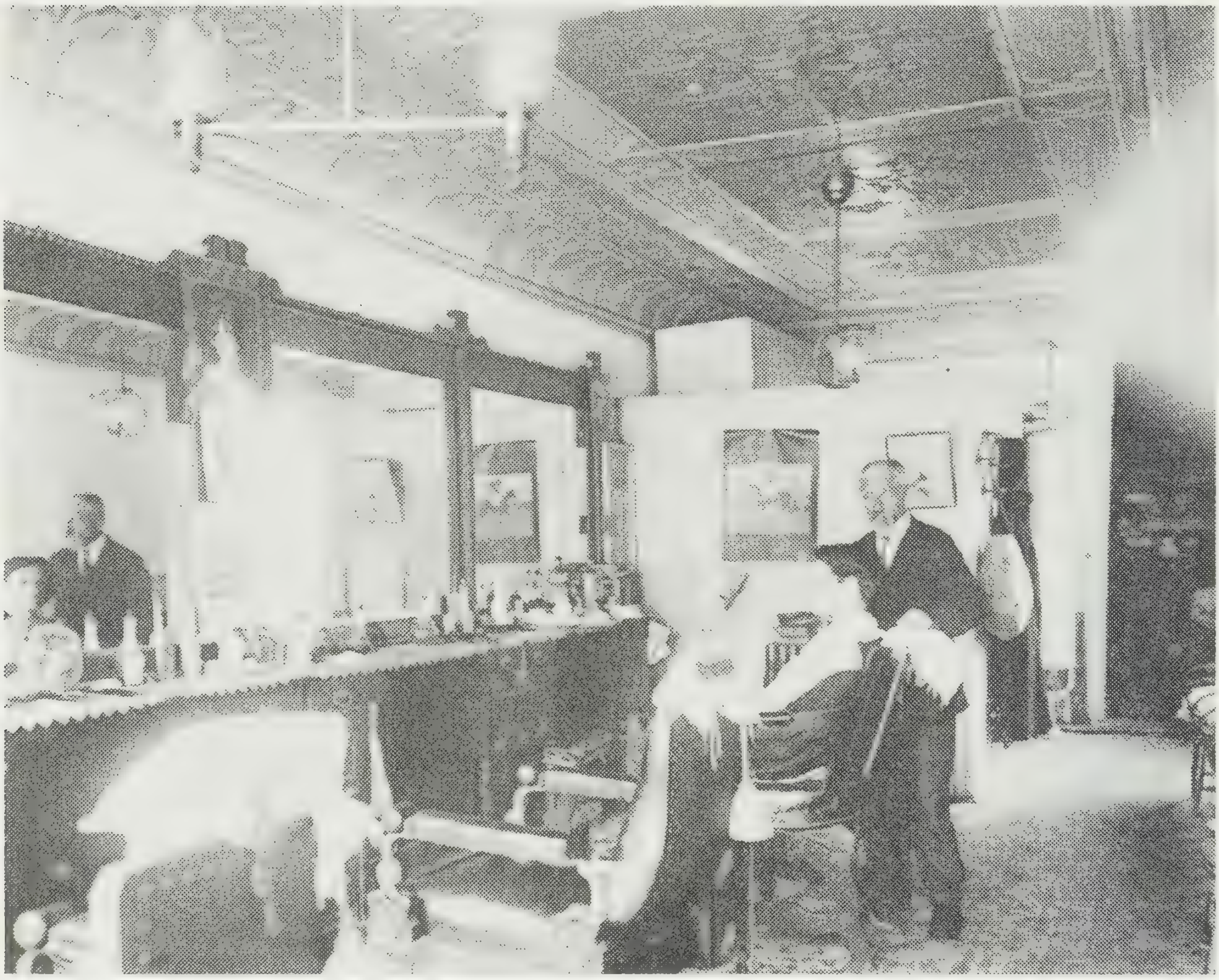
*The old English nursery rhyme was much more real to pioneer children:

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet,
Eating her curds and whey;
Along came a spider
And sat down beside her,
And frightened Miss Muffet away.



Courtesy Russell Foster

BURNS' BLACKSMITH SHOP, EAST OF COBOURG, 1910



Courtesy Mrs. George Irwin

CHARLES WHITE'S BARBER SHOP, GORE BAY, 1890's

In the compartment at the rear was the village's first bathtub, available to customers at 25 cents.

CHAPTE XVIII

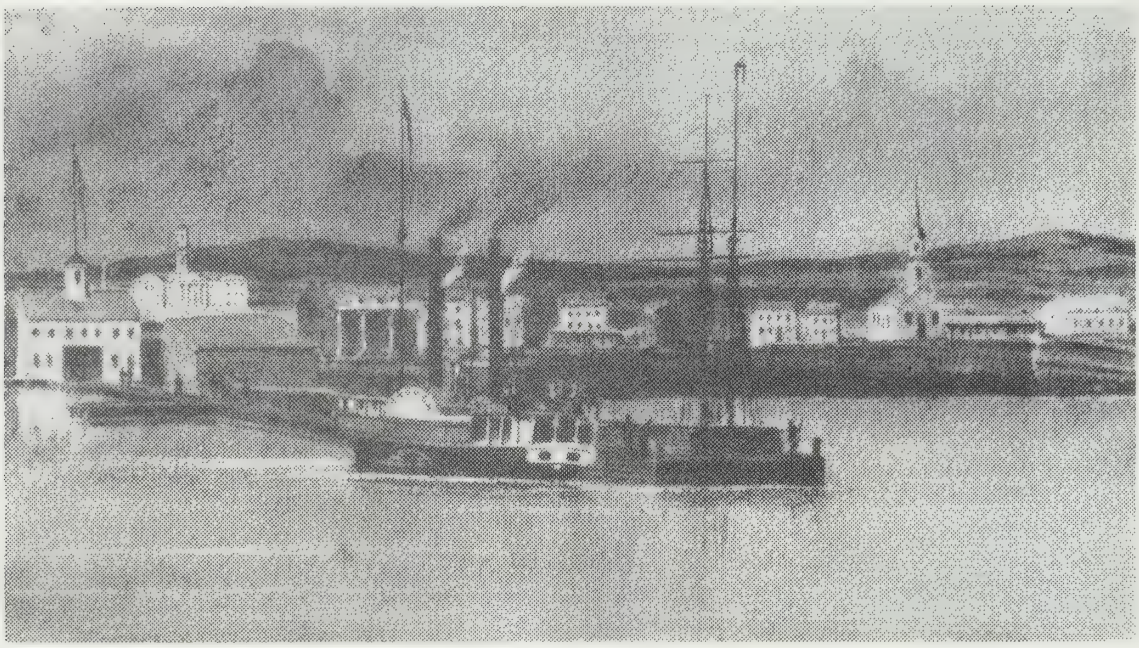
FROM HOME TO FACTORY

WHILE the earliest settlers had to undertake many of the crafts and processes described in this book, it was not long before men began to specialize in trades in the towns and villages. Philemon Wright, founder of the city of Hull, was responsible for the introduction of many workshops and manufactories in his settlement. He writes as follows of the changes in 1804:

> This year I commenced building a blacksmith's shop, which is large enough for four workmen to work in (it contains four pairs of bellows, which are worked by water, also four forges); likewise a shoemaker's shop and a tailor's shop, with a large bakehouse; all those establishments give employment to a great number of workmen. Before I established these different branches I was obliged to go to Montreal for every little article in iron work, or other things which I stood in need of. . . . And I also commenced a tannery for tanning of leather upon a large scale.

Wright had also grist-mills, sawmills, a distillery, a hemp mill, and elaborate barns in his settlement, which was probably the most complete and self-sufficient of all 'back township' settlements. The towns along the front had meanwhile large numbers of tradesmen, though at first the unskilled were often to be found imposing on their fellow-citizens. One settler wrote: 'Mason work is dear, and like the others, every fellow who knows the shape of a trowel or the handle of a stone hammer from the head dignifies himself into a mason, and fearlessly undertakes a chimney which often falls before half finished.'

But competition soon forced unskilled workmen out of business. A census of the town of Cobourg in 1857, when it contained between 6,000 and 7,000 inhabitants, listed five contractors, sixty-six carpenters and builders, and seventeen cabinet-makers, while there were also numerous wagon-



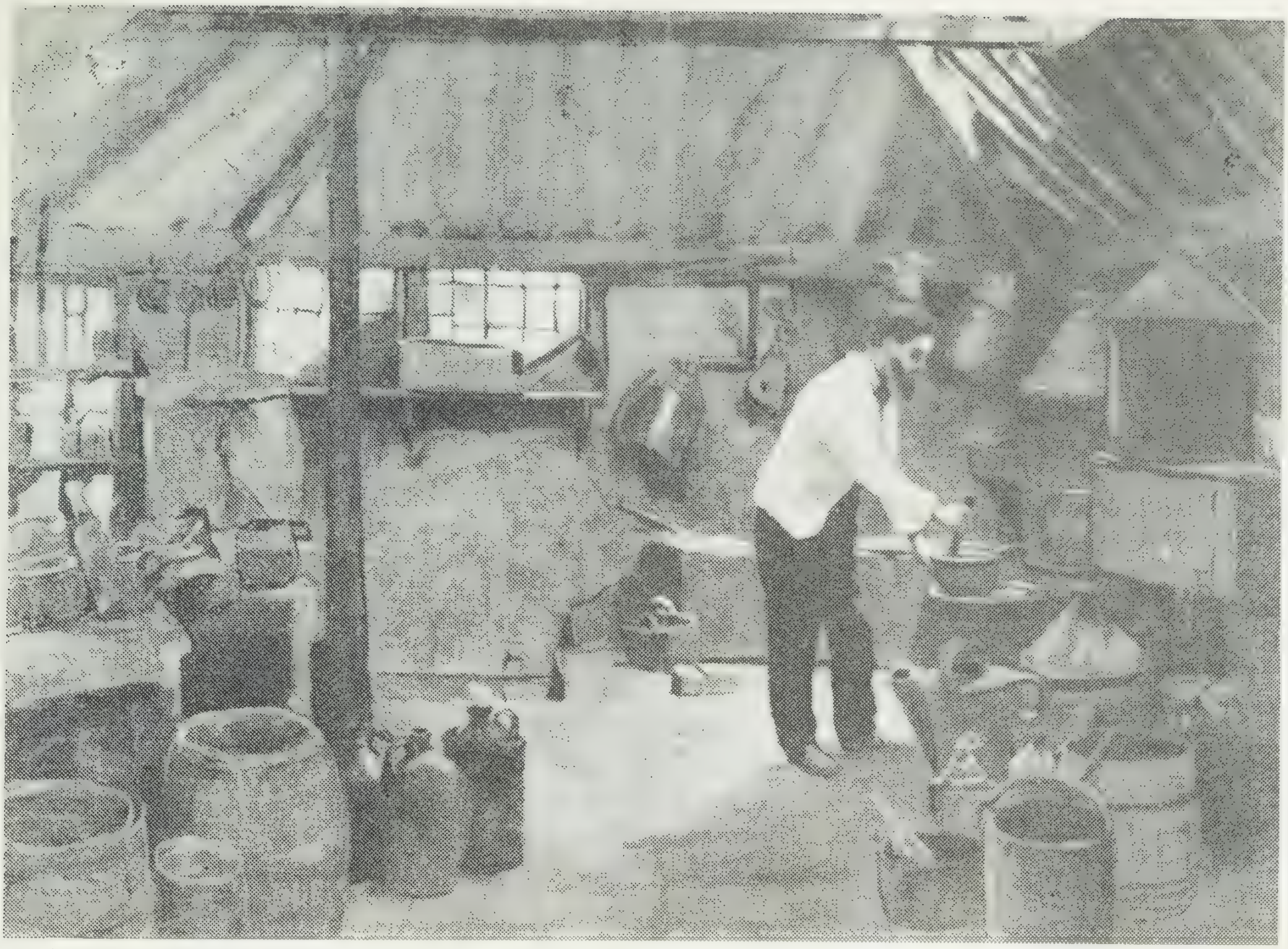
Public Archives of Canada Lieut. Philip Bainbrigge

COBOURG IN 1840

Upper Canada Academy, later Victoria College, may be seen in the rear at the left.

makers, carriage-makers, and shipwrights. Many tanners, tinsmiths, plasterers, and painters carried on their work in the town, and the trade of blacksmith, now a curiosity, had twenty-two representatives. While brick buildings had only begun to be common, there were nine bricklayers in Cobourg. as well as five masons and two moulders. Shoemakers numbered twenty-two and tailors twenty-four, but there was only one clothes-cleaner, one hatter, and one dyer. There were three saddlers and harnessmakers, and nine coopers, whose business it was to make barrels, pails, churns, and vats, using staves and hoops and doing most of the work by hand.

Distillers and brewers numbered four in Cobourg, while several foundrymen and machinists were employed in local manufactories. Two marble factories, presumable largely engaged in making tombstones, two chandlers and soap-makers, and one rope-maker were listed among the manufacturers; while two gas-fitters and a number of engineers, switchmen, and car inspectors indicate that a gas company and railways had been inaugurated. In addition to all these, there were among the numerous merchants of the town many craftsmen like bakers, confectioners, jewellers, watchmakers, dressmakers, and milliners, and the modern photographer was represented by one 'daguerrean artist', whose pictorial products included daguerrotypes, ambrotypes, and crystaltypes, which,

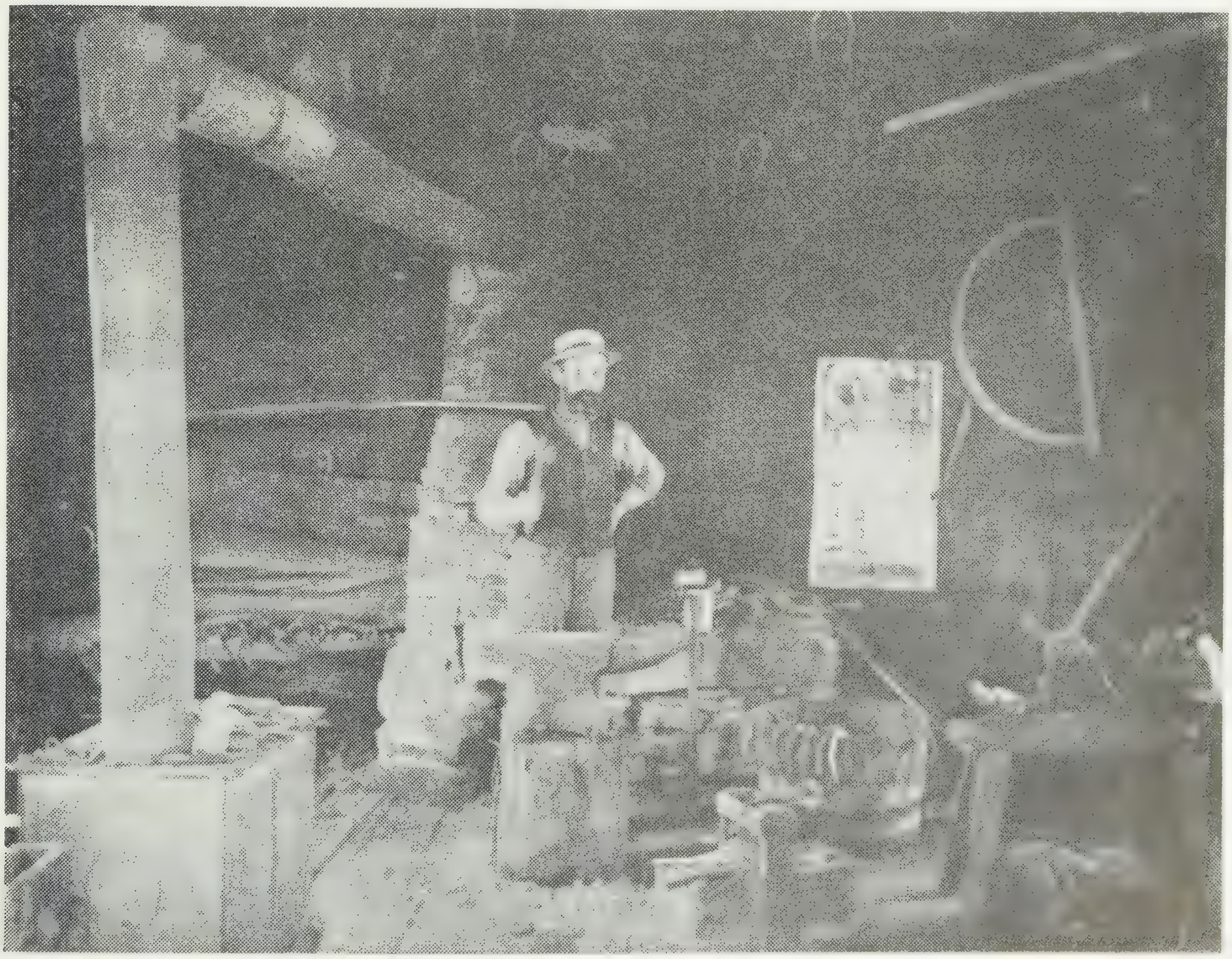


Paris Public Library

Paul Wickson

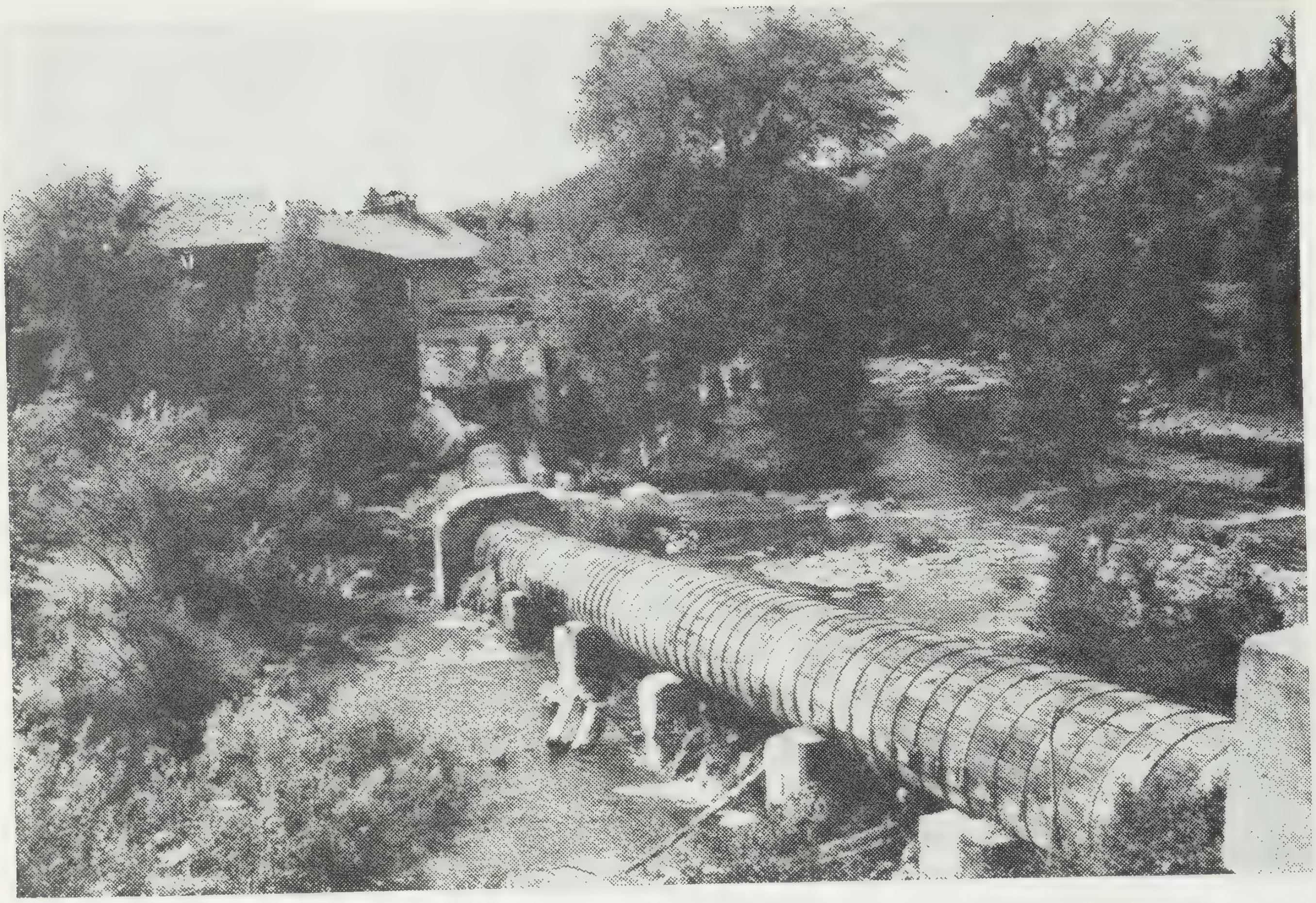
THE JACOB AHRENS POTTERY, NITH RIVER, PARIS, ONTARIO, 1883

Wickson, a pupil of Sir E. J. Poynter, painted the pottery a few weeks before it was destroyed by a flood.



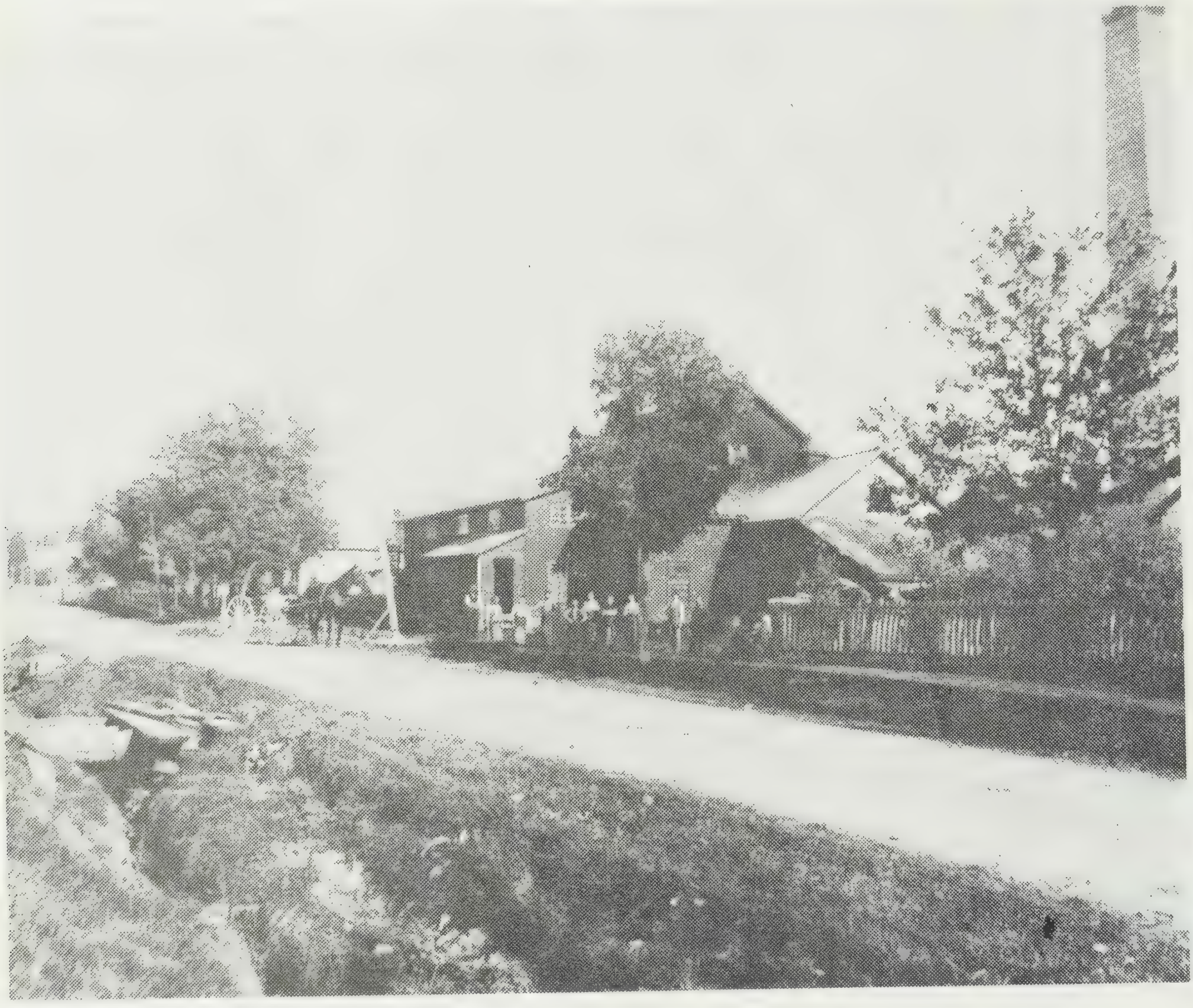
Courtesy Jeanne Minhinnick

GEORGE GILLARD'S BLACKSMITH SHOP



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

DAM AND FLUME, McGOWAN'S MILL, SAUGEEN RIVER



Burton Historical Collection, Detroit

TANNERY IN OMEMEE, 1890's

it was proudly announced, could usually be taken in cloudy as well as fine weather.

The small shop where one or a few tradesmen produced and sold their product lasted longer in some trades than in others, and we have still many independent carpenters, painters, plasterers, and other craftsmen. But there was often a change in status to skilled labour receiving wages from an employer, frequently in a factory where machines replaced hand work. There were soon axe factories and pail factories, chandlers and soap-makers, furnaces (forges) and foundries, sawmills and planing mills, plaster mills and flour mills. Large woollen mills superseded the smaller, though the carding mill long survived to prepare wool for farmers who continued to spin their own yarn, and the fulling mill to work up the cloth. There were oat mills and barley mills, distilleries and breweries, asheries and tanneries, flax works and cloth factories. There were many potteries where stoneware and earthenware were made, and occasional establishments where porcelain-gilding and enameling were carried on.

As the years passed, most of these local establishments went out of existence when new methods and new products replaced the old. Modern furniture factories, concentrated in a few cities, have replaced almost all of the cabinet-makers of seventy-five years ago. A few large firms make our supply of soap, paint, and many other products. We have still shoe repairers, but few of them now make shoes; similarly most tailors have become agents for large clothing-makers. A few large textile factories have replaced the many small firms of an earlier day; others, like potasheries and candle factories, have been entirely or almost entirely displaced. In a word, the day of the small tradesman working by hand in his own shop has largely given way before the onslaught of factory and machine.

With these changes have come others affecting personal characteristics. The sturdy independence of the pioneer who supplied most of his own needs has given way to a more complicated way of life in which no community lives unto itself. But if we are as a result less self-reliant than our ancestors, we enjoy the compensation of innumerable processes, products, and services that would have amazed our pioneer forefathers.

CHAPTER XIX

THE REWARD OF TOIL

THE success or failure of the great numbers who emigrated to Upper Canada in the period of pioneering is hard to describe in general terms. Those who left the Old Land in a sad state of misery and destitution could, if they survived the crossing, hardly be worse off in the New, and as employment was readily available they might quickly become established. Many guidebooks were written to appeal to this unfortunate section of British society—the downtrodden and the evicted, the discharged and unemployed, for whom the changing times seemed no longer to offer even a depressed and dependent livelihood in Britain. 'Ex-Settler' went into some detail as to what such people might expect in Canada. The affluence and independence to which they might aspire, he said, was comparative—'the affluence of a labourer'—and they might attain it if 'sober and industrious' and willing to work hard and long.

The 'gentlemen' for whom he largely wrote, however, would not rise in Canada, but if energetic and prudent might achieve independence 'in a plain manner'; this, he said, would be the 'success' which the new land offered them. To illustrate his point he described the progress made after two or three years by neighbours of his acquaintance, both of them men of considerable means who had received free grants of land. The first had brought from £6000 to £7000 with him, and had spent some £1500 on his lot during the two years since settlement.

> But for this [considered 'Ex-Settler'] he had very little indeed to show: about twenty acres were cleared and cropped and pretty well done, but his log house, which had cost him an immensity, was the ugliest and most uncomfortable edifice I had ever beheld; his barn was not half finished, he had no kind of farm yard or offices and no passable road to his clearing—scarcely a foot-path—yet he liked

the country and was going on well! He certainly had some very nice cattle, but he had also several workmen who idled most industriously, were miserable hands, and were paid two dollars a month more than any others were receiving, even of the best.

The second, with similar opportunity, had been one year longer settled and had spent but a fraction of the first's expenditure. A small log cottage, 'very pretty and very comfortable', had cost about $200 or $250. He had cleared 80 acres, and his progress had been a continual triumph, for he had

Courtesy George M. Douglas

HOME OF SAMUEL STRICKLAND, LAKEFIELD

As George Douglas put it, 'Here is the Strickland home in full glory'.

> a fine barn, farm yard and offices, fine cattle, meadows, crops, fences: every thing about him was flourishing, everything he grew was sought for seed and the highest price paid for it. He had a store also, and in fact made money of everything he looked at; still he maintained his rank as a gentleman, was a very gentlemanly man, and was considered the first person in that part of the country; nor was he out of pocket one-third of the sum the other had wasted. He did not like Canada and meditated soon leaving it.

Here was one in every respect successful who did not feel satisfied with 'success' in Canada, and another who was quite satisfied with a very inferior achievement at high cost.* 'Nothing', observed our informant, 'could more forcibly illustrate the difference between men.'

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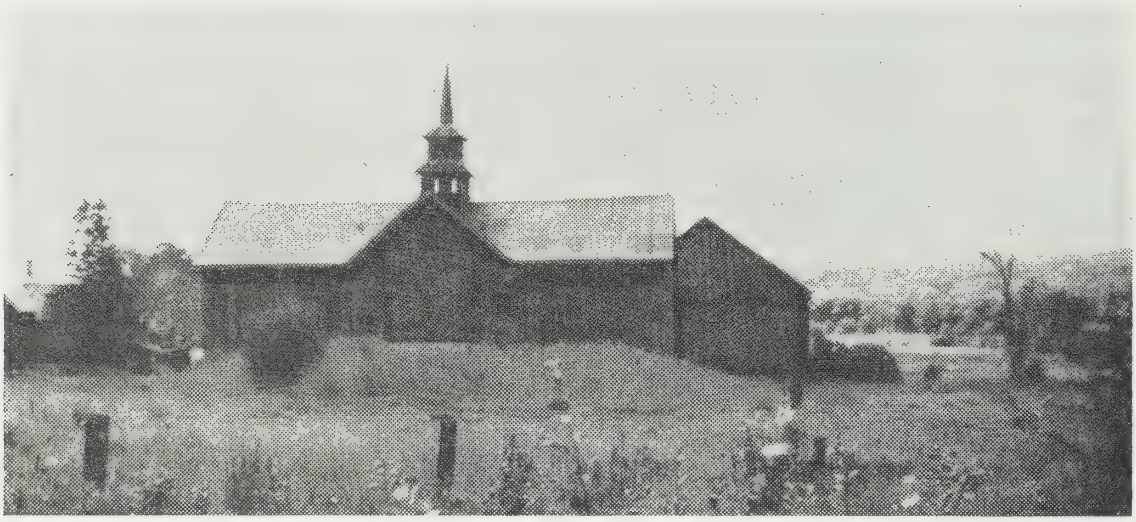
*'A gentleman who should go out with the intention of embarking all his capital in farming', wrote the Reverend Isaac Fidler in 1833, 'would not, from what I could learn, be so likely to do well as by putting his money into the bank in York, for which he would draw from eight to twelve per cent annually.'

An interesting story is told about a third of these 'gentleman farmers', a canny Scot named David Darling who was the builder of what came to be known as 'the musical barn'. Darling settled in the Lake Simcoe region, a little to the north of the village of Warminster. Near by, where Highway 12 cuts Simcoe Road 19, was then Eady Corners, boasting a school and a general store and post office. In fact the sweet peas of the store's garden now spring up in wild profusion on the site, where nothing else remains.



Photograph by the Author

THE MUSICAL BARN, NEAR WARMINSTER

The historic barn, erected in 1856, is 42 feet high, and it is surmounted by a 36-foot spire and cupola with weathercock. Known as a gentleman farmer because he hired labourers to do his work, David Darling used to climb up each day to his cupola, which was fitted with seats, glass, and screens so that he could survey his domain in the valley below and see that his labourers were earning their wages.

One of the hired men, Eby Sallows of Coldwater, was given permission to go there evenings to play his violin, and his music, wafted over the valley, was appreciated by neighbouring farmers and travellers over the road. Moved a short distance in 1906 to avoid the Canadian Pacific Railway, the musical barn is now on the property of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Walker, who have recounted the story many a time as they recalled 'the old days' in the district.*

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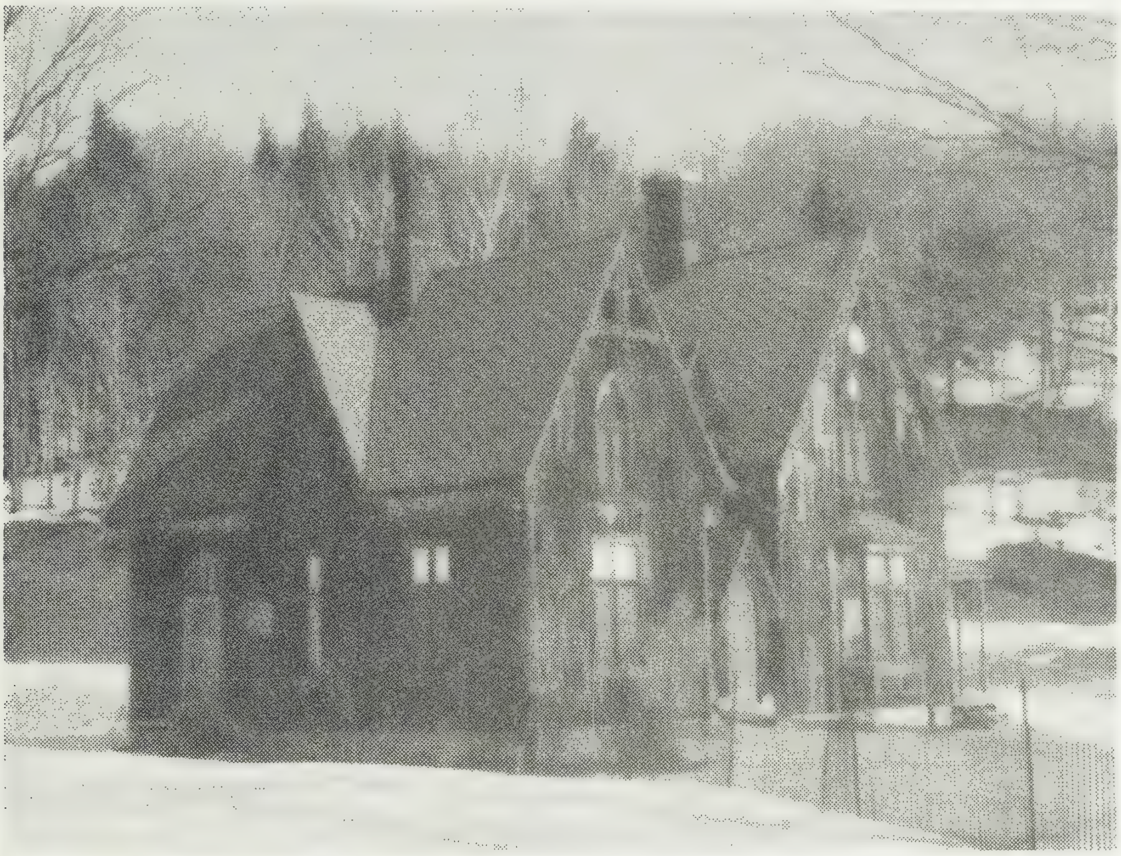
*This account is from one of a long series of historical articles the author has written for the *Toronto Daily Star*. They have appeared since February 8, 1958, under the head *Old Times in Ontario*.

Innumerable old-time houses remain in Ontario, and the best of them reflect the keen enthusiasm of their original builders for Canadian woods. Some homes indicate a preference for the bizarre, others an attempt to introduce foreign architecture or personal whim. An octagonal house in Mount Pleasant is but one interesting example.

Two miles from Creemore is the old home, 'Claverleigh', of the Reverend W. Forster, Church of England incumbent of St. Luke's Church, Creemore. He was a retired sea-captain who decided to conclude his life in the odour of sanctity. Planning to have his house of Gothic design, he brought out an English architect to carry out the project in 1872. When he became clergyman at St. Luke's his house became the rectory, and he rode to and fro on horseback. The Anglicans of Collingwood liked the design so much that they borrowed the original plans and produced a replica of it in stone.



Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Lambert

'CLAVERLEIGH', HOME OF THE REVEREND W. FORSTER

There was no transplanting the class system and prejudices of the Old Land to the New. More than one group attempted an exclusive Church of England colony, and Chief McNab tried to transplant a Scottish clan into the wilds of the upper Ottawa, with himself playing the leader, and the rest his retinue of servants and retainers. The same district was selected as the locale of an English gradation of lesser aristocracy and clergy. Fortunately for Canada these plans proved abortive, and the McNab affair was an especially miserable failure.

Though the idea was universally condemned, people of means continued to bring out servants with them; they almost always regretted it. Observing that the only result was loss of both money and temper, 'Ex-Settler' advised that servants be made to pay their own way, for of what use was any agreement or contract to work for you 'in a country where they have only to walk a few yards into the woods and how are you to find them?'

Immigrants who were unsuccessful in adapting themselves to the new life were a social problem. Many, seeking to drown their miseries in strong drink—or perhaps merely in reaction to intense and unremitting toil—could not resist the temptation of cheap whiskey. 'You will see every inn, tavern, and beer-shop filled at all hours with drunken, brawling fellows', said 'Ex-Settler', 'and the quantity of ardent spirits consumed by them will truly astonish you.'* It was always preferable in their own interest, consequently, to pay labourers and servants partly, if not entirely, in orders on stores, or in flour and pork, for otherwise many a man would drink up nine-tenths of his wages, and his wife and family would come to the employer and not only beg something to eat but extol those who paid in pork and flour.

A statement issued by the Canada Company, covering the 'Huron Tract' between 1829 and 1840, gave the statistics of success. It reported that over 6000 settlers had been established, with improvements made and live stock acquired to the value of £242,287. Of this total 514 families who had arrived entirely destitute shared £90,486; sixty-one families who had arrived with under £10 had acquired £10,242; 254 families with less than £50 on arrival held £40, 526; and £100,850 17s. 9d. had been accumulated by families of slightly greater means who could not have had, at home, one-fiftieth of the financial independence they had achieved in Canada.

Robert Stevenson was very favourably impressed by the

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*And it was not just 'the lower orders' who were saturation drinkers. Fred DelaFosse, who was a remittance man himself, knew many who were 'drinking themselves to death'. It is recalled that a hotel in Gore's Landing, Rice Lake—the White House—was the favourite resort of well-to-do young Englishmen in the process of dissipation ending in death.

Courtesy John Rempel

THE ABANDONED LANGTON HOME, STURGEON LAKE

The eventual fate of many a residence of pioneers.

40-year-old settlement of Pennsylvania Germans in Waterloo, who were, in fact, universally admired as highly successful farmers.

> The farms [he wrote] are large and well cultivated; the barns the largest I ever saw, built generally on the slope of a hill so as to give warm stables, byres, sheds, and poultry houses below them, and the houses good two-story buildings. It is said that this township produces more wheat than the Eastern and Ottawa districts put together, and, if you were to add to it its neighbour township of Dumfries, I dare say more than the whole lower province.

Another long-settled district—that near Whitby, which was an important settlement before Skae's Corners (Oshawa) became prominent—provided statistics of the success of Scottish settlers. One from Lanarkshire had £500 on arrival and was worth £1200 three years later. Another, in the district twelve years, had come without capital, but he had arranged to purchase 200 acres and started to clear it. He lost his property by fire, but set to work with undiminished vigour and was soon the possessor of 300 acres of the finest land and worth nearly £3000. Such men were regarded with pride in their community, and their success was a stimulation to enterprise.

Mrs. Edward Copleston spent the winter at a backwoods tavern in 1856, the landlady having come to the region thirty years earlier when she was ' a fine specimen of a buxom, bonnie Scotch lassie'. Like most pioneers, she loved to tell of experiences 'when the hardships of an emigrant's life from want of roads, railroads, mills, and post offices—and last though not least—churches and schools, were tenfold greater than in the present day'. Then there was scarce a house in Orillia, not an inhabitant in the nine miles between her lot and the Lake Simcoe shore; she had to carry provisions, clothing, and furniture on her back over the nine-mile trail while her husband was raising their shanty; she once had to stare a bear 'out of countenance', and—even more serious—to reject an Indian chief who came to their house to trade wives! She had weathered the storm of early privation well, however, and enjoyed many blessings in addition to a £1000 homestead. In fact she 'had laid by hard cash and was regarded as a "banker's wife" in the woods, always having the needful to lend to her more straitened neighbours whose thrift had not been equal to her own'.

Toronto Public Library T. H. Ware

INDIAN VILLAGE, RAMA, LAKE COUCHICHING, 1844

Perhaps few families achieved the success and possessed the all-round adaptability that characterized the Reverend James Magrath, his wife, four sons, a daughter, a cousin, and a female servant, who settled at Erindale in 1827. Ten years later Anna Jameson visited the home and was eloquent in her admiration of their versatility and public spirit:

> They have now one hundred and fifty acres of land cleared and in cultivation; a noble barn entirely constructed by his sons, measuring sixty feet long by forty in width; a carpenter's shop, a turning-lathe,

> in the use of which the old gentleman and one of his sons are very ingenious and effective; a forge; extensive outhouses; a farmyard well stocked; and a house comfortably furnished, much of the ornamental furniture being contrived, carved, turned by the father and his sons.
>
> These young men, who had received in Ireland the rudiments of a classical education, had all a mechanical genius; . . . they are their own architects, masons, smiths, carpenters, farmers, gardeners; they are, moreover, bold and keen hunters, quick in resource, intelligent, cheerful, united by strong affection and doating on their gentle sister, who has grown up among these four tall, manly brothers like a beautiful azalia under the towering and sheltering pines. Then I should add that one of the young men knows something of surgery, can bleed or set a broken limb in case of necessity; while another knows as much of law as enables him to draw up an agreement and settle the quarrels and arrange the little difficulties of their poorer neighbours, without having recourse to the 'attorney'.
>
> The whole family appear to have a lively feeling for natural beauty and a taste for natural history; they know the habits and the haunts of the wild animals which people their forest domain; they have made collections of minerals and insects, and have 'traced each herb and flower that sips the silvery dew'.

And best of all, the Magraths had risen above the class prejudices current in Britain in their day and did not deign to set up two of their sons as storekeepers—an occupation frowned upon by 'gentlemen' in the Old Land in their 'antipathy to anything like trade', as Mrs. Jameson put it. When Mr. Magrath had a lingering feeling that he ought mildly to apologize, she hastened to assure him that she entirely approved the 'honest, generous spirit and good sense' that reflected the rise of a new way of life in the Canadian wilderness.

Innumerable immigrants arrived with some small capital of £20 or £25, and the Honourable Adam Fergusson—one of the two founders of Fergus—advised such people to push into the woods, but near enough to settlements that they might hire out in such spare time as they could take from their own lots, and so earn provisions. Their progress thereafter commonly followed a pattern:

> A crop of potatoes and fodder for a cow is the first object [he wrote], and this may be accomplished the first year if you arrive early. The second you will be enabled to feed your family with the necessaries of life, and the third year you may find yourself possessed of a yoke of oxen, a cow or two, and a year-old calf, a couple of pigs, poultry, &c., abundance of provisions for your family, and fodder for your cattle.

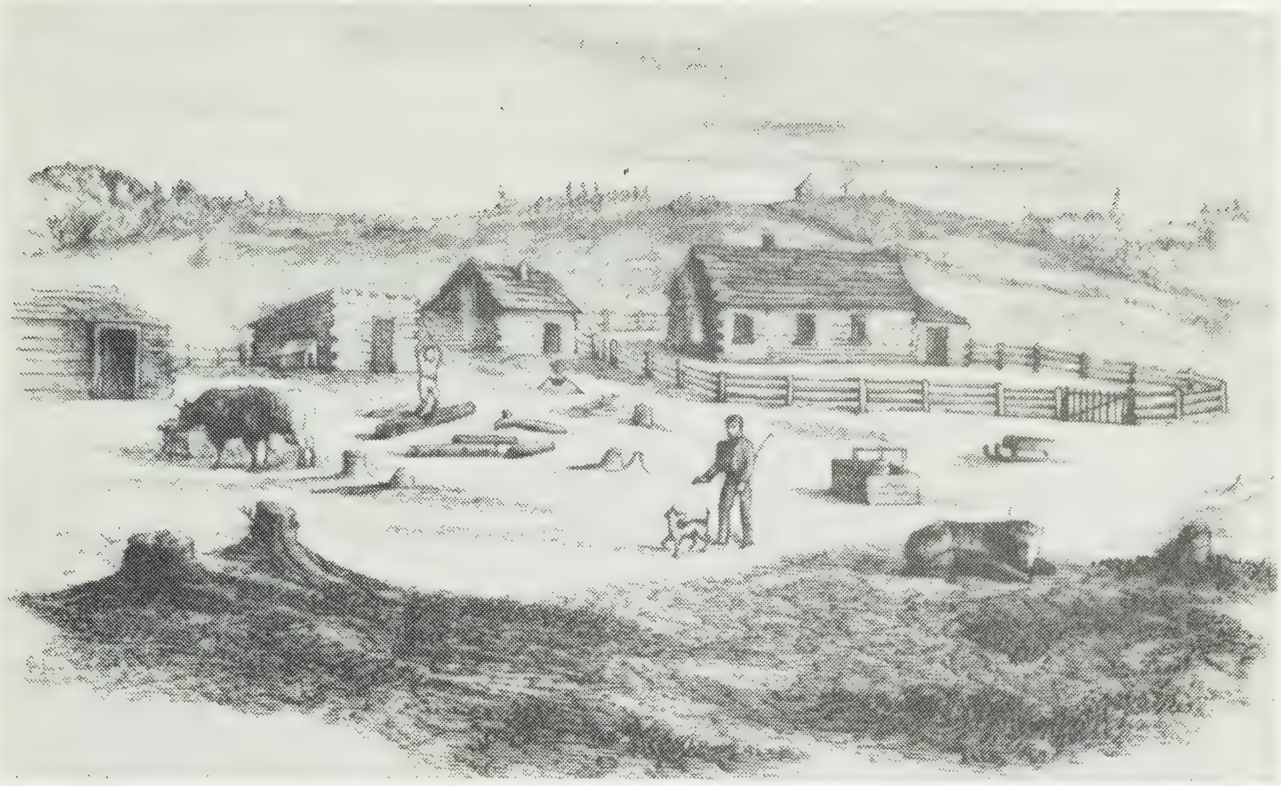
And it would not be long, he prophesied in somewhat idyllic language, before 'the humble shanty, . . . the original nest of the family', would be left standing near a much better dwelling, 'a useful memorial of the slender rill from whence ease and affluence were destined to flow'.

But it was a class still lower in material goods—in Britain the destitute labourer—whose rise was even more spectacular.

> They are encouraged [wrote Catharine Traill] by the example of others whom they see enjoying comforts that they could never have obtained had they laboured ever so hard at home. . . . 'What to us are the sufferings of one, two, three, or even four years, compared with a whole life of labour and poverty' was the remark of a poor labourer who was recounting to us the other day some of the hardships he had met with in this country. He said he 'knew they were only for a short time, and that by industry he should soon get over them'.

This was frequently true, but not universally nor without unremitting toil over a long period. A meeting of early settlers in Trafalgar Township recorded for Robert Gourlay their experiences during the first ten years of settlement, and the summary—a classic in itself—is undoubtedly representative of the life of the general run of pioneers who arrived without capital:

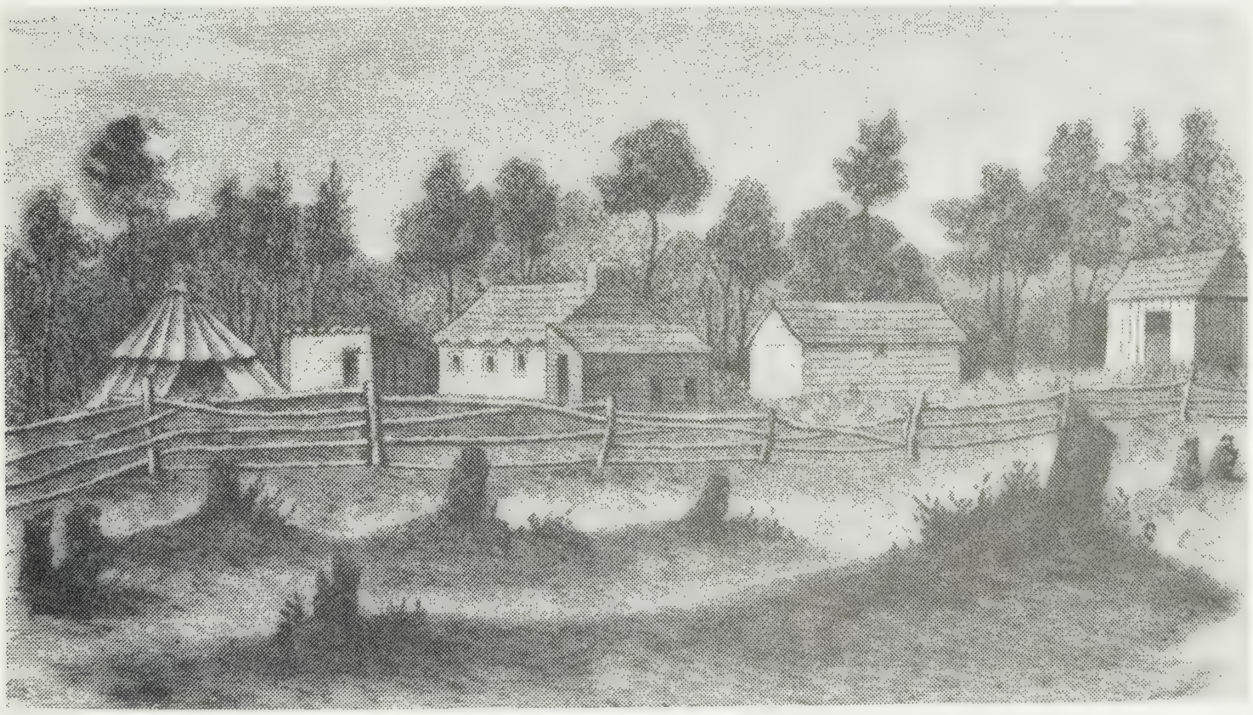
> Know then that the greater number of our farmers, when they first settled in the wild woods, have little more property than a cow, a yoke of oxen, a log chain, and an axe; and some have little or no property at all but their axe alone. The family generally consists of a man and his wife, with a number of young children, unable to hire hands; the whole of the labour naturally devolves upon the man, and hence it is that for six or seven years, till such time as the roots of the timber begin to rot in the ground so that he can use the plough, and until the eldest of his children grows up to help him, his toil is incessant; four or five acres are all that he is able to clear and sow in a season, and that is generally put in so late that it produces but little, so that the whole of his crop will scarcely support him through the year; but many times he has to work out for a part of his bread.
>
> Clothes he must have for himself and his family, and these must be got out of the store, and merchant's goods are very dear in this province; and as he hath nothing to pay with he is obliged to go on credit. These in a few years soon run up high, so that by the time he gets his farm in such a state of improvement as might enable him to live comfortable he is frequently obliged to sell it in order to pay off his debts. Such is the consequence of beginning poor. But this, you will observe, is only the gloomy side of things; for those who are so fortunate as to weather out the storm the first ten years, without



Anne Langton

THE FIRST LANGTON HOUSE AND YARD

John Langton, one of the best of the 'gentlemen' immigrants, settled on Sturgeon Lake in 1833. He said that Peterborough, the nearest supply depot, was 'a very pretty, picturesque, thriving village, . . . with near thirty genteel families in visiting distance.' Of the first six settlers on Sturgeon Lake, he said, four 'have been at an university, one at the military college at Woolwich, and the sixth, though boasting no such honours, has half a dozen silver spoons and a wife who plays the guitar.'

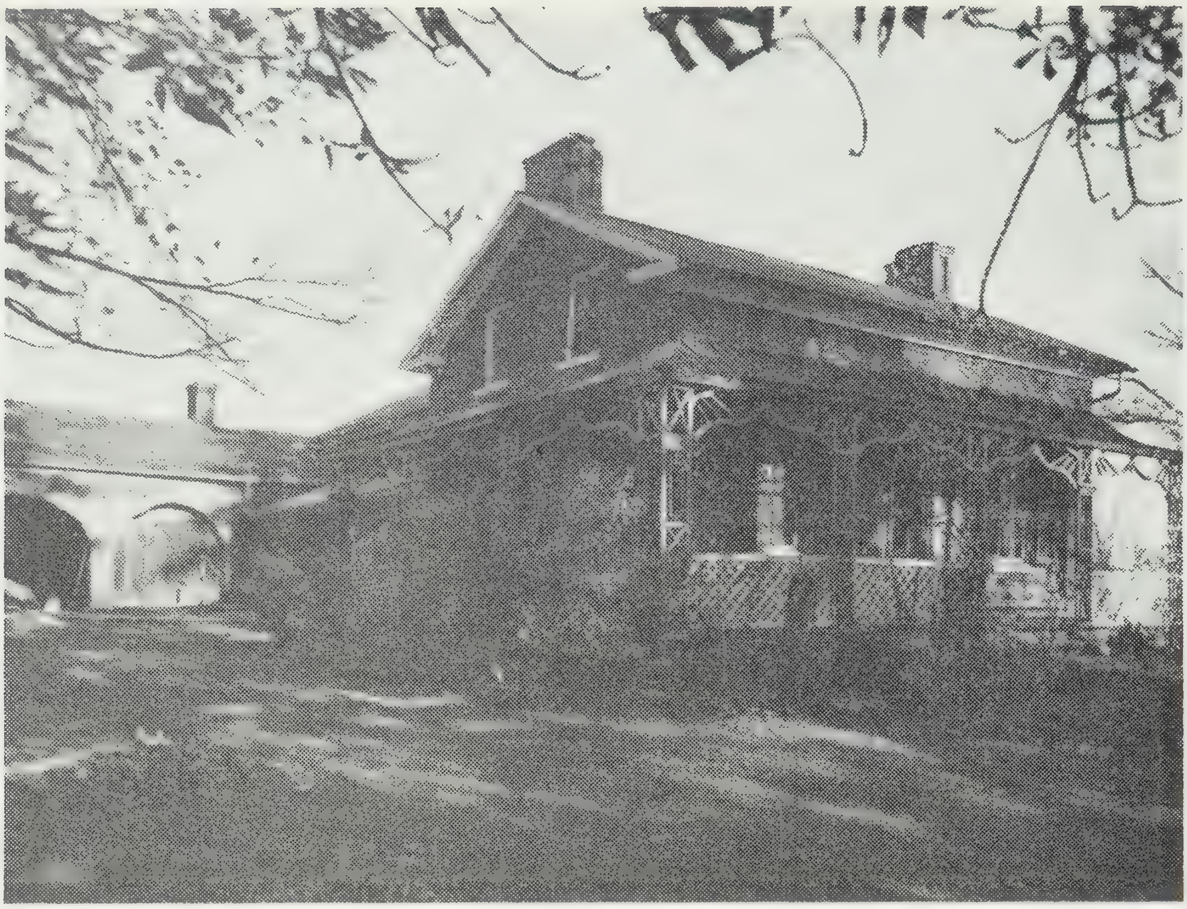


Courtesy Langton family

Anne Langton

JOHN LANGTON'S HOUSE, 1837

The marquee at the left was the dining-room, and other progress is evident.



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

BRICK HOME AND DRIVING-SHED, NEAR STREETSVILLE

The brick driving-shed is uncommon, but the verandah typical.

Courtesy Kenneth W. Johnson

MISSISSIPPI RIVER AT ALMONTE

sinking their plantations, are generally enabled to spend the remainder of their days in comfort.

A few examples of their progress appear from letters home or statements to supervisors. Andrew Angus had this to say in Lanark Township in 1825:

> This place has been settled little more than three years, and some that left Scotland with nothing have now from twelve to eighteen head of cattle, besides sheep and hogs. This township grows a great deal of Indian corn. I planted five quarts, the produce of which was fifty bushels. From seven bushels of potatoes I had 240. . . . There are 1560 people, 95 oxen about four years old, 180 under four and above two years, 338 milk cows, and more than 1000 under two years. The taxes, which all go for schools and bridges, are trifling —3d. for every cow, 4d. for every ox above four years old, and 1d. for every acre of cleared land.
>
> . . . .
>
> I and my family [said James Dobbie of the same district] are still taking well with this country, and I really do bless God every day I rise that He was ever pleased, in the course of His Providence, to send me and my family to this place.
>
> . . . .
>
> Often [said a Scotswoman] when I am feeding the dogs and cats wi' meat that I hae seen the day we wad hae been blythe to hae had oorsel's, the tears are like to rin owre my cheeks for the puir starvin' folk at hame.

Arthur Lang, one of the Ballyghiblins, as the Irish emigrants to the Mississippi River in Ramsay Township were often called, pointed out that his own success was by no means universal:

> I have now arrived at the spot where Providence seems to have appointed me, and where, I believe, I shall spend the remainder of my days. We are all healthy and well pleased with the situation, and that is what a great number can't say. Some have lost all their children, others two or three of their family. Most of these sufferers are persevering. Others who have never felt any such hardship have run away almost at the very first appearance of the place.

But Mrs. John McLelland, of Cambuslang near Glasgow, was certainly not one to run away from hardship. She and her husband settled in Dalhousie Township in 1820, and three years later her husband left her and their four children—the eldest a boy of 9— to earn a little money during the summer on the Oswego Canal.

> As soon as the gude man went away [she recounted in 1861 with no little pride] I took heart, and with the boy began to dig between the

> stumps and plant potatoes. When the fall of the year came and we had gathered them in, how many do you think we had? No less than 350 bushels of potatoes, and thirty bushels of corn raised by myself and my little boy. Oh! it was a faithful piece of land! When we had cleared it all, save what was reserved for firewood, we maintained eleven sons and two daughters, and now one daughter has fourteen children. We put most of them to learn trades and save something forbye. It was really to my sorrow we parted with the land. I had my dining-room and parlour, and lovely garden and orchard, and the beautiful fields always so faithful in their crops no matter what we put in them.
>
> My heart is in that land yet. It was drawn by another Glasgow man at the office in Perth in 1820, but when he saw it he came back and renounced it. My gude man liked it as well as any he had seen and took me to it and the children. I walked on foot through the thick bushes, crossing two rivers on rafts, and carrying one child in my arms and a stone of meal on my back. Before it began to repay our labour we had hardly a rag left on our backs and nothing on our feet. The children were naked entirely.

Many immigrants, notably the Irish, cheerfully made great sacrifices that their relatives—or even mere friends—might join them in the Promised Land. Consider the case of Mary and Rose Breen as related in *Papers Relative to Emigration* (1847):

> Mary Breen came out from Mr. Noble's estate in Fermanagh in the spring of 1841: . . . she obtained service and sent home for her sister Rose in 1842, who joined her and also obtained service. The two sisters saved from their wages and sent home money to assist two brothers to come out; the one arrived in 1843 and the other in 1846, and obtained employment; they sent also for their mother, a widow, and a sister of weak health. . . . All are now comfortably settled and doing well.

Innumerable settlers, in fact, were eloquently enthusiastic over their success in the New Land. A Scot in Zorra Township wrote his brother in Aberdeen that Upper Canada in the early eighteen-forties

> is a fine country, it is increasing fast in population, and the conveniences of life are getting more easy to be obtained. I shall just say that since I came here, which is now about ten months, I have not had a single day's sickness, but have been able to continue closely engaged in cutting down large trees and preparing the ground for producing the necessaries of life. This will, no doubt, astonish you, considering the poor state of my health for two years previous to my coming to this country. The sugar season ended about two weeks ago, and a season of very hard labour it was; it requires to be watched night and day for about a month. I have made about 12 cwt. of sugar, which brings about £2 per cwt.

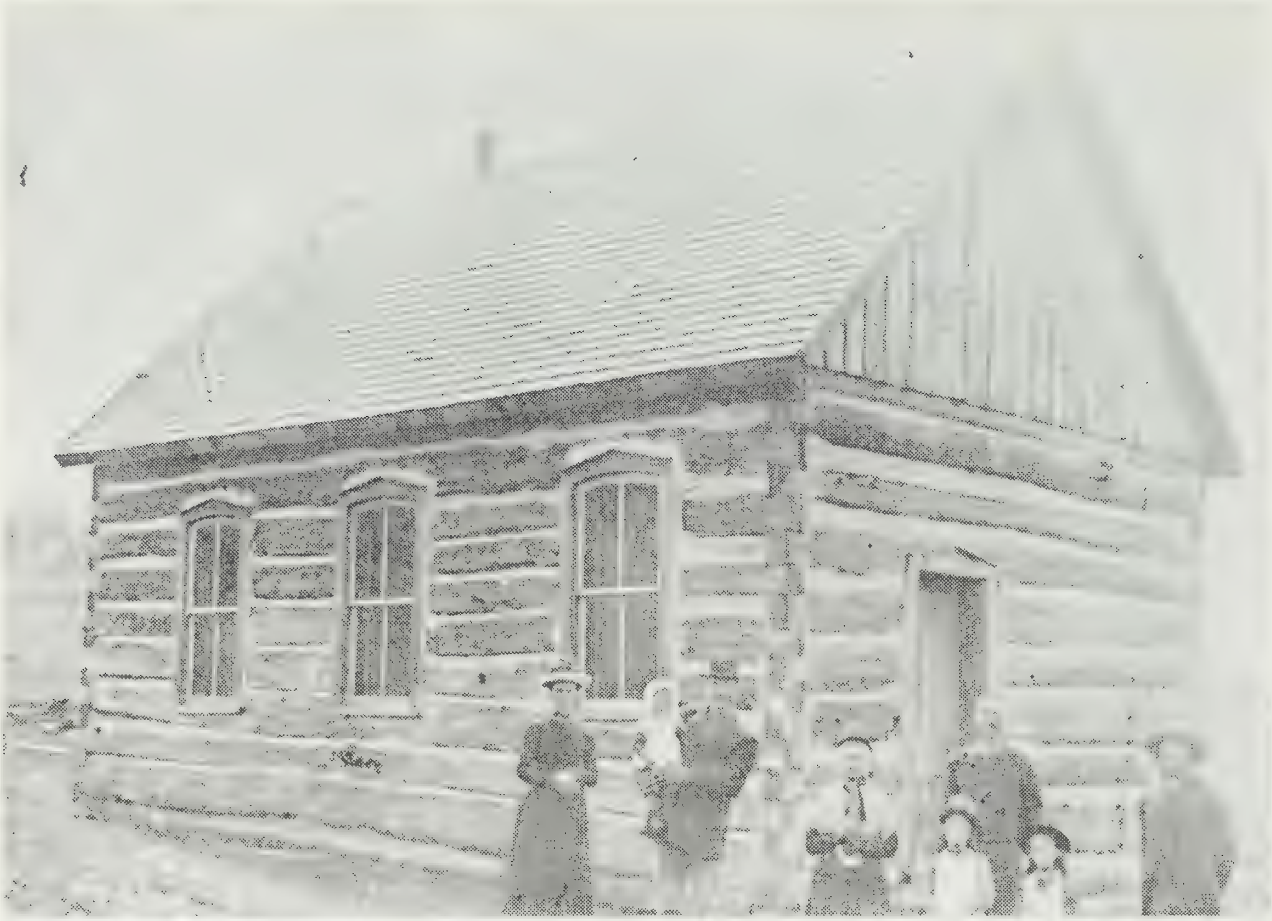
Photograph by the Author

ABANDONED LOG HOUSE NEAR SUTTON

But many hundreds of log homes are still in use.

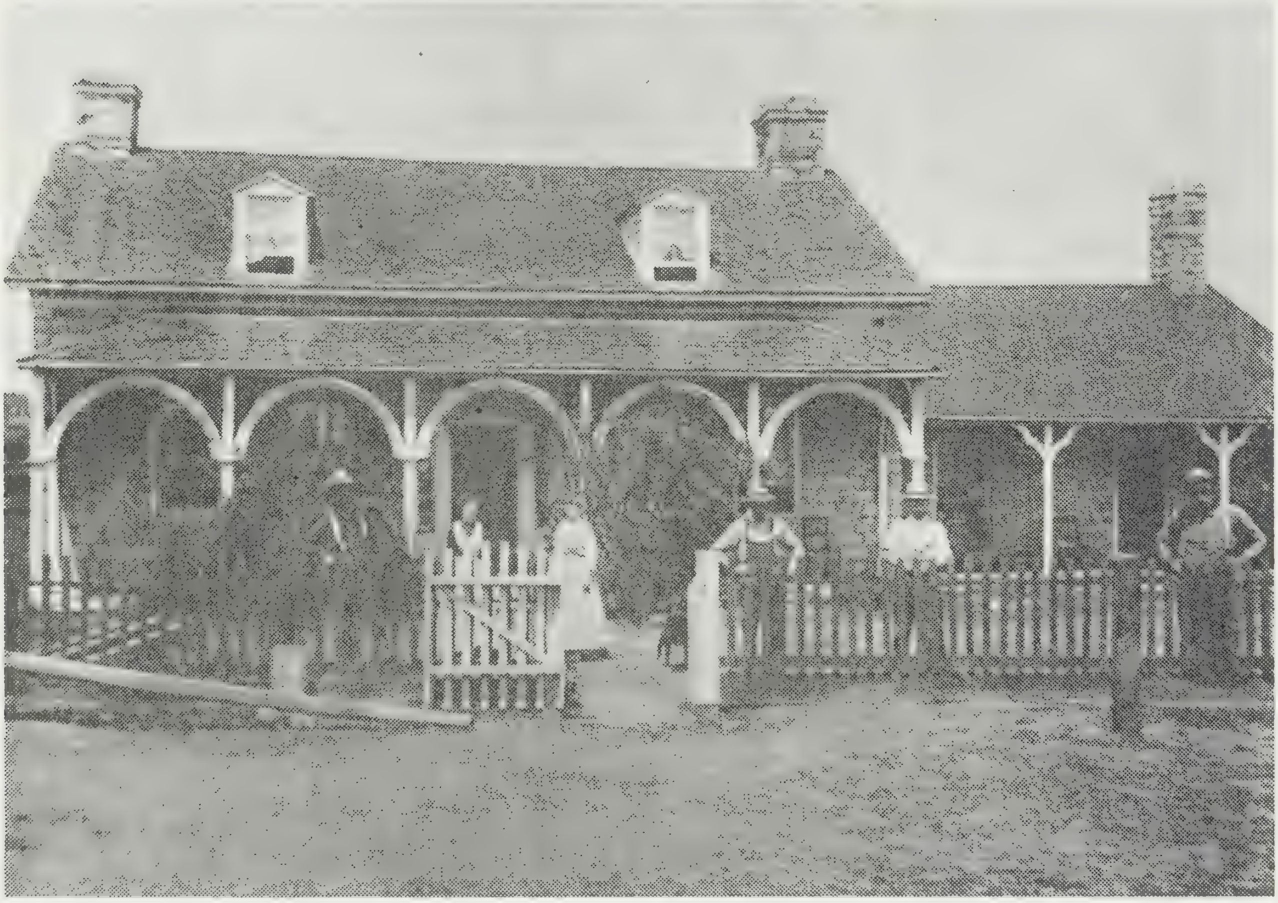
Those who had a love for nature and the leisure to admire it, like the Reverend James Magrath, found no end of pleasure in the 'wild tiger lilies, magnificent turncap and scarlet lilies, ladies' slippers, columbine, marygolds' that grew profusely in the forest. The whip-poor-Wills (or *whipper-wills*, as more often called) and blue jays are frequently mentioned as among the more intriguing wild life of Canada; and the colourful autumn scenery drew a fine piece of description in the diary of Joseph Abbott:

> *October 22d.*—The boundless, measureless forest—the stupendous wilderness of woods which overwhelms the whole face of the country—exhibited, in the bright sunshine and the pure atmosphere of this lovely morning, a picture as novel as it was beautiful in the eyes of a stranger; for instead of waving their luxuriant foliage over mountain, hill, and valley in the same rich though monotonous hue of living green, the trees now had assumed a colouring which, in brilliancy and variety, exceeded all description. The soft maple is the first to commence this gorgeous display by changing to a rich crimson; the sugar maple then follows in similar though more sombre tints, variegated with the yellow of the trembling poplar, the orange and gold of the beech, and the sere brown of the butter-



Courtesy Charles H. Williamson

DEER LAKE CHURCH, HALIBURTON



Conservation Authorities, Ontario

HINCK STONE HOUSE
Located between Newburgh and Camden East.

nut, while the sturdy oak still maintains his deep green in defiance of those harbingers of winter.

There were plenty, however, whose failures and misfortunes prevented much in the nature of admiration for anything in the New Land. He who had loved the bonnie braes and rugged lochs of Scotland or the green meadows and winding lanes of England found himself transplanted (in the expressive prose of James Taylor's *Narrative*) to

Geikie, *Life in the Woods*

'OUR HOME IN THE WOODS'

John Geikie, who lived in Bidport Township, found that life in the woods was characterized by 'gloomy forests, rail fences, log-huts, and decayed stumps,' and considered that the sound of woodpeckers and blue-jays 'redoubles instead of dispersing the gloom.'

> a foreign land, far distant from his relations and friends, fixed in a desolate wilderness, shut up in a miserable hut called a shanty, the cold winter winds penetrating through its crevices and piercing his benumbed limbs with their chilly blasts; he will wildly look around the place he has chosen for a habitation for his beloved wife and family, whom he has, perhaps, dragged from home almost against their will; he views them with cheerless glances, and their returning looks of despair must wound his very soul—all this he will have to endure with the prospect of spinning out a miserable existence.

An anonymous resident of Otonabee Township, probably Thomas Carr of Keene, sent this plaintive lament to the *Cobourg Star* in December 1831:

My Hame

I canna ca' this forest hame,
It is nae hame to me,
Ilk tree is suthern to my heart,
And unco' to my e'e.

If I cou'd see the bonny broom
On ilka sandy know',
Or the whins in a' their gowden pride
That on the green hill grow:

If I cou'd see the primrose bloom
In Nora's hazel glen,
And hear the linties chirp and sing
Far frae the haunts o' men:

If I cou'd see the rising sun
Glint owre the dewy corn,
And the tunefu' lavrocks in the sky
Proclaim the coming morn:

If I cou'd see the daisy spread
Its wee flowers owre the lea,
Or the heather scent the mountain breeze,
And the ivy climb the tree:

If I cou'd see the lane' kirk yard
Whar frien's lye side by side;
And think that I cou'd lay my banes
Beside them when I died:

Then might I think this forest hame,
And in it live and dee:
Nor feel regret at my heart's core,
My native land, for thee.

Those who were called 'the lower orders' by the privileged—who had a monopoly of wealth, education, and cultural advantages in the Old Land—were rejoiced at their freedom in the New.

> They appreciate [wrote Sir Francis Bond Head in *The Emigrant*] the happiness of living in a land in which the Old Country's servile habit of touching the hat does not exist, in which every carter and waggoner rides instead of walks, and in which there are no purse proud millionaires, no dukes, duchesses, lords, ladies, parsons, parish-officers, beadles, poor law commissioners, or paupers, no titles and no taxes.

Their new-found freedom did not always sit lightly upon them, and not a few were surly, brash, and ill-mannered, and especially to those who were equally aggressive in their pom-

THE GRAVE OF A PIONEER
Thomas Carr, first settler in Keene, was buried on his farm.

posity, gentility, and affectation of superiority, as many a 'gentleman' and his 'lady' were, especially in their earlier years in Upper Canada. As a result the whole category came in for harsh criticism, and particularly from those who hated democracy and much preferred a state of poverty, repression, and subservience for the masses.

> Of the lower orders in the Upper Province [wrote Thomas Hamilton in *Men and Manners in America*] it is impossible to speak favourably. They have all the disagreeable qualities of the Americans, with none of that energy and spirit of enterprise which often convert a bad man into a useful citizen. They are sluggish, obstinate, ignorant, offensive in manner, and depraved in morals, without loyalty and without religion.

The reaction of these people to conditions in Upper Canada, where they were as frequently landowners as they were farm labourers or small tradesmen, was usually one of enthusiastic satisfaction mingled with unfortunate memories. With more enthusiasm than orthography, an English farmhand wrote his father that he liked Canada very much: 'I am at librty to shout terky, Quill, Pigons, Phesents, Dear, and all kinds of Geam wch I have on My Back Wood.' John Howe, too, recalled 'insolent' gamekeepers, tyrannical lords of the manor, and 'country parson magistrates' uniting to transport starving poachers to Australian penal colonies, and observed with some feeling, 'Merciful God! that men, that Englishmen should witness such things and endure them!'

Perhaps Robert Slade's comment is still more typical of the average reaction 'We have no landlord to come at Michaelmas* to say "I want my rent!"; no poor-rates to pay; we are in a free country. *It is a pretty thing to stand at one's own door and see a hundred acres of land of his own.*'**Or, as George Wood wrote from lot 12 in the fifth concession of Downie Township, 'I am now a *master*, where I never could expect otherwise than to see myself and my family as *servants*'.

These pioneers were obviously overjoyed by their success in the New Land. While in no respect was the return in any sense lavish, yet there was often a steady accumulation of savings in the bank, an improved home, the addition of a parlour, of equipment of a labour-saving nature, the purchase of *pleasure-wagons* (as carriages were first called) and other luxuries. And there was that feeling of stability and independence, of competence and self-sufficiency. James Croil recalled that as late as 1860 the farmer and the tradesmen of the locality were still a co-operative unit in the typical pioneer fashion:

> In summer time we lived upon bacon, beef, and pork hams nicely cured and smoked, and fried with eggs, supplemented with cheese, bread, and butter, all home-made and of the best. In October we kill a beast. The blacksmith takes a quarter, the shoemaker another, the tailor or the carpenter a third, and ourselves the remaining one.
>
> In December we kill a second, cut it up, freeze it, and pack it away in barrels with straw, where it will keep till the first of April. The hides go to the tanner, who takes one half of each and gives me the other when tanned; the shoemaker comes to the house once a year and makes out of it boots and shoes for young and old. The tallow is rendered and made into candles, and all the refuse scraps at 'killing time' are boiled up with lye and converted into barrels of soap. And then the women-folk spin the wool and weave the stockings, sew the quilts and counterpanes, and make the featherbeds, so that come what may we are always sure of a living.

But these time-worn practices were destined for rapid change. Smith's *Gazetteer* says that in 1844 there were 2,017,115 acres under cultivation in Canada West, and the province's farmers had accumulated 175,604 milch cows and 139,584 oxen and horned cattle over two years old. It was at this period that developments in farm machinery, as well as in industries that had long been crafts, were beginning to effect economies in labour, and the more well-to-do were quick to take advantage

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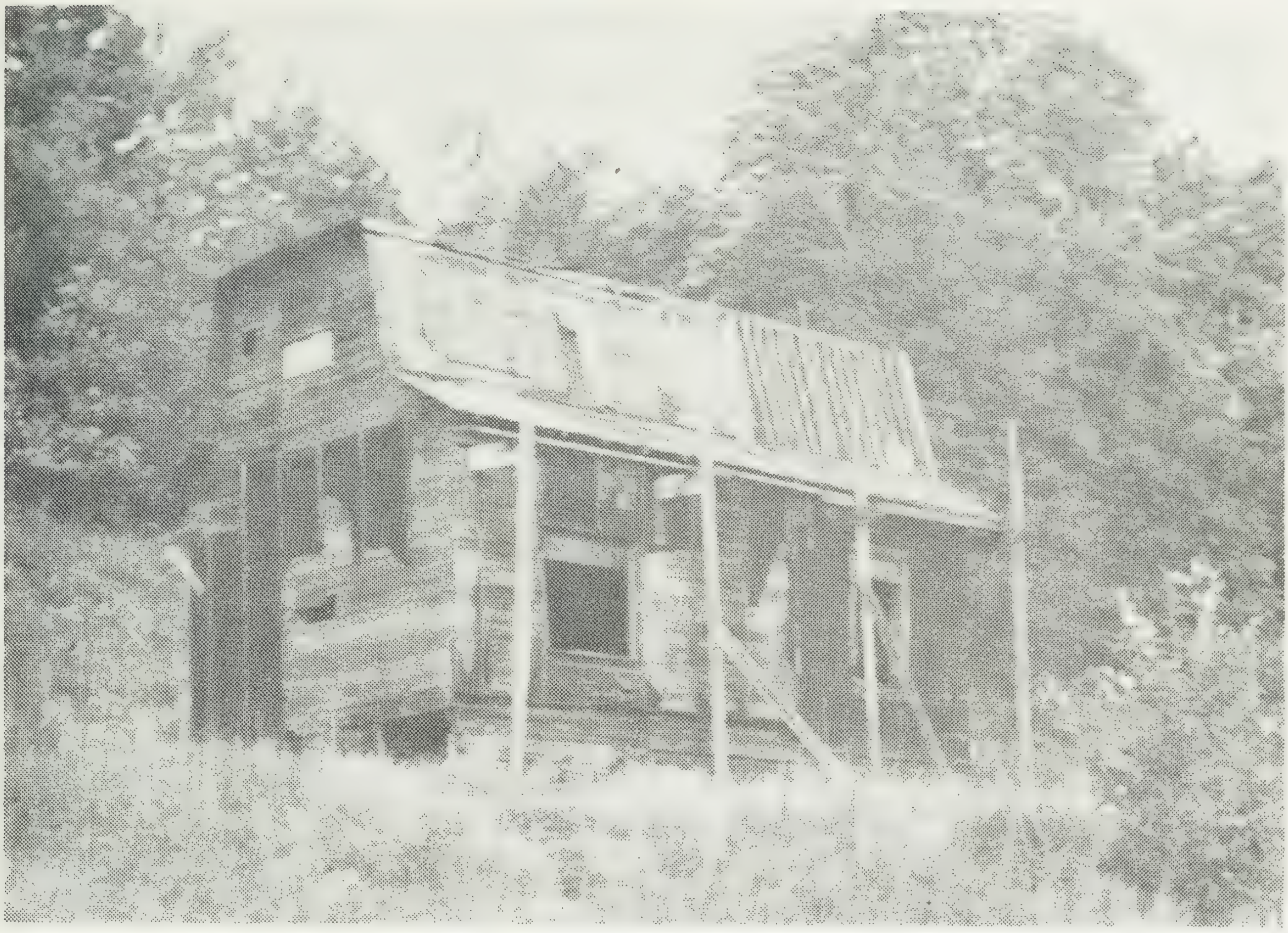
*The feast of St. Michael, September 29th, when rents were usually collected in England.

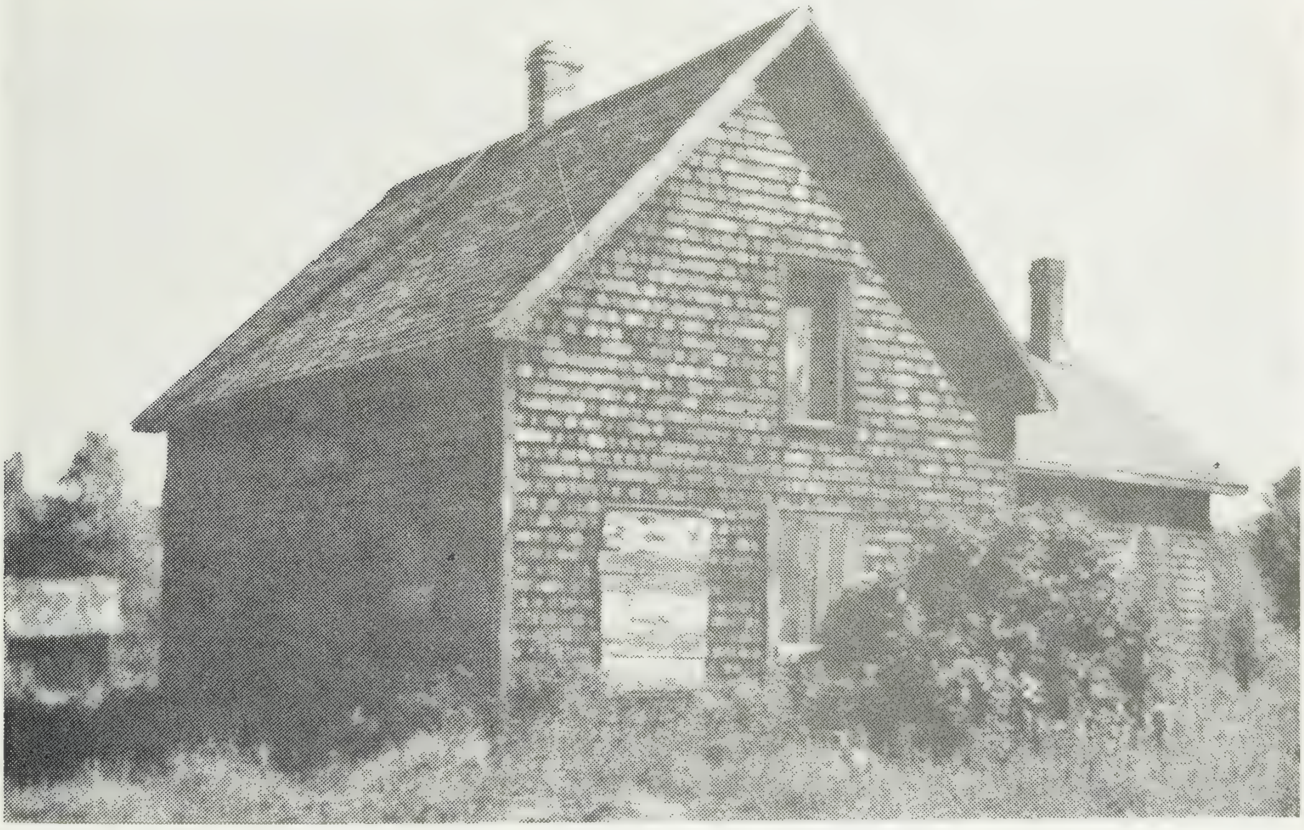
**Italicized by the author as the classic statement of pioneering.



Photograph by the Author

ABANDONED HOUSE, ALGOMA

On Highway 17 between Iron Bridge and Thessalon, 1960



Photograph by the Author

ABANDONED HOUSE, ALGOMA, 1960

Located east of Iron Bridge.

of the opportunity. Within twenty or thirty years pioneer methods were hardly more than a memory in long-settled districts.

What were the general results that many of the pioneers lived long enough to see? By the 'seventies the typical Ontario landscape was no longer primeval forest as it had been thirty or forty years earlier in all but the longest-settled districts. Many farmers had by this time destroyed all their own trees and were buying cordwood. Creeks that had driven mills were dried up, and the prophecies of the few who foresaw still greater evils from forest destruction went unheeded. But if the pioneers in general hated trees, they slaved for years to obtain improved homes. By 1880 about 45 per cent of them had houses of stone, brick, or good frame, and 54 per cent had first-class barns, stables, and sheds. The *Canada Farmer* waxed almost poetic in its comparison:

> Privation has given place to comfort and abundance. The Canadian farmer wheels it to market and church in a modern and handsome vehicle drawn by a fine team of horses instead of jumbling slowly along in an ox-cart. The mower and the reaper do the work of the back-breaking scythe and cradle. Sewing-machines and pianos have crept into the house, and girls disport themselves in the latest fashions. The rail-road whistle, whose shrill sound means near markets, can be heard in almost every rural homestead.

Or, as William Brown eloquently and feelingly expressed it in his *America: a Four Years' Residence in the United States and Canada* (1849):

> A man having a good farm of his own in Upper Canada . . . may live here as happy as a king; . . . and although he has had much toil and hard labour to bring his farm into a profitable state, he has an ineffable pleasure in contemplating his own handy-work, and can say with truth: 'All this I have accomplished with my own hands: I found this place a howling wilderness, and I have made it a fruitful vineyard: I found it a swampy and barren desert waste, and I have made it a pleasant garden.'

While most of our pioneers fell into a class somewhere between extremes of success and failure, a good many experienced a life of 'quiet desperation', in Thoreau's famous phrase, and there were many reasons for it. As has been pointed out, many had arrived with nothing, not even health. Some had even tried to clear the land of huge pines by use of the English axe—not much more than a hatchet; in innumerable instances their

Archives of Ontario

Reginald Drayton

THE RUINED SHANTY, 1877

Once the home of an early settler on Pigeon Lake. The Drayton paintings are a valuable recent acquisition to the Archives.

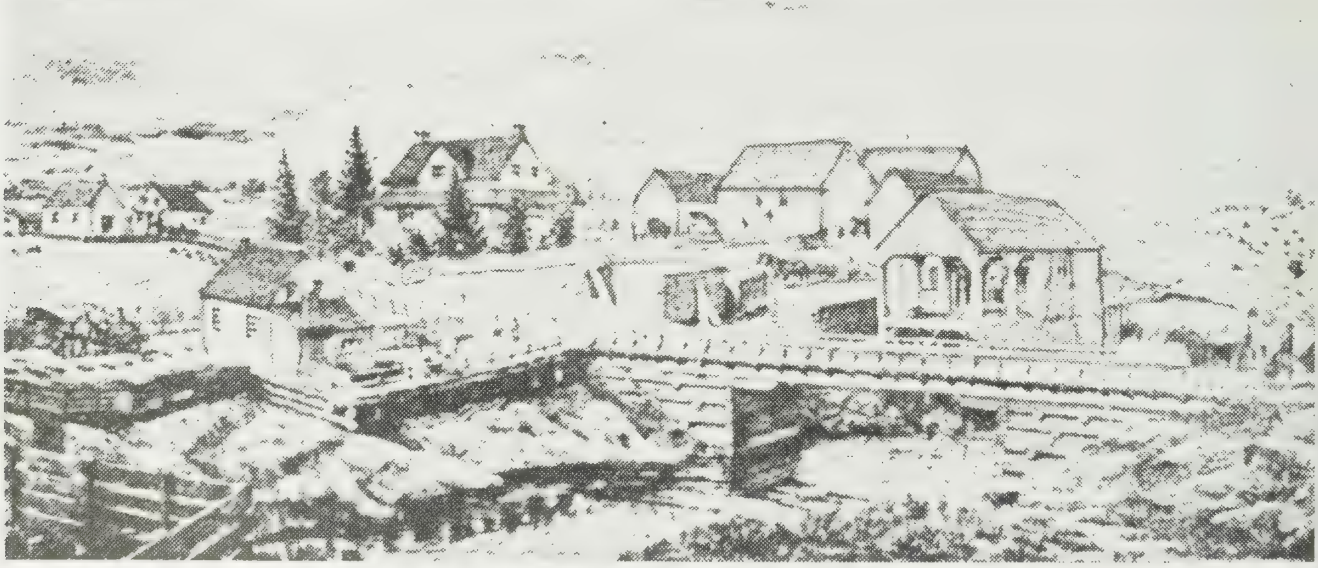
National Gallery of Canada

George Reid

MORTGAGING THE HOMESTEAD

First Settlement

Fifteen Years Later



Thirty Years Later

THE SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

land was so rocky that it defied cultivation; fever and dysentery due to vast swamplands had decimated many families, and women had often died from sheer isolation and loneliness.

Many became so depressed by hardship that they lacked even the desire to improve their lot. There are accounts of crowded church services where, due to abject poverty, the collection totalled a few cents. 'Mortgaging the Homestead', painted by George Reid in 1890, has caught the poignancy of the situation with a masterly brush. The mortgages on some farms are still in force after a century and more, while other pioneers merely abandoned their land and removed to the West, often at government expense, to avoid further physical and moral degeneration.

But innumerable others were not borne down by adversity and eventually breathed the sweet smell of success. The accompanying group of three pictures no doubt originated as emigration propaganda, but for many it rang true.

The stages of development are stated to be fifteen years apart, probably a fair average to effect the changes. The crudeness of the conditions in the upper picture are obvious. The rough unsquared logs of house and shed, the stumps in the small patch of cleared land, the congested swampy creek, the oxen hauling tree-trunks—these speak of the primitive.

The middle picture shows the march of civilization. The houses and barns are of squared logs well mortared. Fences, almost lacking earlier, are prominent. Instead of a single log as a bridge we see a solid corduroy structure; and a fine river with a waterfall has replaced the congested creek. Grain has been harvested and horses have succeeded oxen. Orderliness is everywhere and success apparent.

The third stage shows a smiling countryside. A fine frame house and capacious barns have replaced the primitive logs. A road, perhaps a concession line, crosses the river on a bridge based on stone-filled cribs. The waterfall has been harnessed to a mill, which one of the sons is no doubt operating; and houses near by suggest that several relatives have formed a settlement which will soon be a village. If we could see the verandah, grandpa would be there whittling a stick, and grandma in her cap and shawl quietly rocking in her easy chair. The fickle goddess fortune had smiled upon them.

CHAPTER XX

THE MODERN FARMER

THE agencies which have improved Canadian agriculture are many and varied. The progressive farmer has now unexcelled opportunities both for specialization and for the best information on any agricultural subject. The Federal Department of Agriculture, with its Science Service and some 300 experimental farms across the country, has both fact-finding and demonstration divisions. There has been as well the use of subsidies and the control of farm prices. Butter sells at an arbitrary price, and with some 200,000,000 pounds stored by the Dominion Government because of lack of demand; and in Ontario the competition of coloured margarine is prevented, ostensibly in deference to the ancient prejudices relative to animal and vegetable foods, but actually because political parties fear the loss of rural votes.*

The first experimental farms were established in 1886, but progressive people were advocating something similar much earlier. Henry Taylor, in a book published in 1843, said with remarkable foresight that modern scientific agriculture could best be encouraged in Canada by 'agricultural school farms' which, he believed, could be made largely self-supporting. He suggested that the government rent farms in various townships and employ 'our agricultural youth', which would in itself stop the drift to the towns while raising the status of farming: 'for when the mind has once acquired a taste for scientific pursuits and discovery it feels delight therein that is likely to preserve it from intemperate courses of amusement'.

The Ontario Agricultural College, founded in 1873, while not patronized by any large percentage of farmers' sons, provides not only education but advice. With industrial enterprises, the Federal Department, and other agencies, it engages in research on fertilisers, pest, disease, and weed control, animal nutrition, and growth stimulants. Experiments are continually being made in the inter-breeding of animals and inter-blending of plants, and we now have rust-resistant and sawfly-resistant wheat, as well as 'herbicides' and 'pesticides' for all sorts of agricultural enemies. Entomologists study the control of moulds, rots, mildews, and other parasitic forms of plant life, and the result is a saving of millions of dollars, especially among farmers who are enterprising enough to take advantage of the latest methods.

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*Farmers' associations recently (1962) persuaded the Federal Government to reduce the controlled retail selling price of butter and to assume all the additional loss; and the Ontario associations of milk producers are trying to prevent delivery trucks from carrying margarine to customers.

Statistics show, however, that in many regions, and especially those which are marginal as far as agriculture is concerned, the yield in every type of crop is steadily declining. County Agricultural Representatives are available to aid those who are progressive enough to inquire, but many continue to mine their farms rather than farm them. The adaptation of crops to soil and climate is a prime need, and of equal importance is the increase or maintenance of soil fertility by crop rotation and a generous and intelligent use of fertilisers.*

The pioneer co-operated with his neighbours in bees for farm labour, but most modern farmers do their own work, with or without hired help. Yet the more successful and progressive have for several generations co-operated on broader lines in agricultural societies, farmers' and women's institutes, lodges, and political or commercial co-operatives. The Grange, or Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, a farmers' secret society organized in the United States in 1867, spread to rural Ontario in the 'seventies and 'eighties. The aim was to increase agricultural prosperity through co-operation, and some of the enterprises were obviously calculated to avoid commercial exploitation in the more regular channels. But mismanagement and recklessness united to cause the complete failure of a fire insurance company, a trust company, and a wholesale supply organization.

In 1890 the new and very different Patrons of Industry was organized, but it was wrecked when its anti-'National Policy' program was defeated in the election of 1895. The Farmers' Institutes, government-aided, were stronger even earlier, and the Women's Institutes* of 1897 and subsequent years greatly alleviated the female side of rural life in many localities, merging later in some instances with the United Farm Women of Ontario.

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*Another modern danger is 'vertical' farming controlled by packers, canners, and other processors to supply themselves, a type of competition that the average independent farmer cannot effectively meet. The Honourable Tom Kennedy, a recent Minister of Agriculture for Ontario, considered that 'the day of the family farm is fast coming to an end', but the present (1962) Minister, the Honourable W. A. Stewart, has appointed a committee to study the dangers of 'vertical integration' to 'our family farm'.

In 1914 the old Grange emerged reincarnated as the United Farmers of Ontario, with innumerable local clubs; and for a time the U.F.O. was a strong political party in the agrarian interest, with educational and commercial opportunities prominent. Under its direction was the United Farmers Co-operative Company, whose patrons participated in the advantages of co-operative buying and selling, wholesale and retail, of groceries, seeds, tools, and stock; particularly did wholesale marketing of live stock prove successful. Of great and permanent value, too, were the social and educational opportunities offered, which are nowadays a prominent feature of the Farm Forum movement.

At the close of the nineteenth century fewer immigrants were coming to the farmlands of Ontario, and there was a notable and ever-increasing emigration 'out West'. The Western States 'fever' was followed by Australian, Californian, South American, Red River, and Saskatchewan-Alberta manias, with special emigrant trains becoming more and more common, and whole Ontario communities with their implements and farm stock pulling up stakes and heading west. Religious and racial clashes in the counties nearest the Quebec border added to the numbers leaving their homesteads; and all sorts of mining 'rushes' and ventures, in and out of Ontario, lent further impetus to the exodus. The farming was disturbed at times by the discovery of gas in western Upper Canada, and by a hope of oil wells in various localities, a craze which at one time or another has unsettled minds throughout Canada.** 'Oil-Fever Year' in Scarborough Township was 1866, when a company of local

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*Their founder, Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, was a prime mover in Ontario to improve the status and life of rural women. She was also prominent in the inauguration of domestic science classes for girls at all educational levels.

**Among other 'fevers' in Ontario was one for gold in Caledon Township about 1818, which found many a settler prospecting near Cataract village, at the Devil's Pulpit, and in other hilly spots along the Credit; none was found, but one man tried unsuccessfully to make salt out of brackish water. An island of rock in Melancthon Swamp, Dufferin County, was long believed to contain silver.

Courtesy V. X. McEnaney Chief Beaver

JUNCTION HOUSE, CATARACT

The Indian artist had something of the style of Grandma Moses.

enthusiasts drilled 1000 feet on lot 8, concession 1. All they got, however, was strong brine full of lime and magnesia, plus a trace of refined oil that a practical joker poured in one night!

What proportion of our pioneers, many of whom seemed so satisfied and successful, are represented by descendants today, or even sixty or seventy years after settlement? The most careful investigation of pioneer survival is that made for Victoria County in 1921 by Watson Kirkconnell. He comments as follows in his excellent *Victoria County Centennial History* (1921) upon the statistics resulting from his research:

> Investigation thus shows that over one-third of the patentee pioneers of Victoria are still represented in the county by their descendants in the male line. The additional instances where their blood persists through their female descendants' intermarriage with other families still found would doubtless, if it could be traced, raise the proportion of pioneers surviving to over one-half. Further, many of the patentees unrepresented were land speculators and beneficiaries of grants to U. E. L. descendants who did not settle on their lands but sold out later to others who did occupy permanently and may therefore be regarded as the real pioneers on such lots. A checked list of such pioneers by private purchase would raise our figures still higher, but its preparation is, unfortunately, impracticable. The *bona fide* statistics for patentee survivals through the male line, as shown

above, are, however, in themselves sufficiently remarkable. A record of 981 patentee families in a single county persisting for the better part of a century is most unusual in Ontario.

In some parts of Ontario, in fact, almost all of the original settlers are no longer represented on the land. When a similar survey was made thirty years ago in Kingston Township, Frontenac County, only one farm was found to remain in the family to which it had been originally patented.

Conservation Authorities, Ontario

GEORGIAN HOME, NEAR ERINDALE, 1830's

While there is no doubt that national stability is furthered by the continued residence of families in a locality, and particularly when they are of good stock, yet it need not always indicate love of the land, perseverance, or some equally high motive. In many instances—and especially on 'marginal' land where farming is at best only partially successful—the interpretation may well be that lack of enterprise and initiative keeps the family where it is, preferring to live with difficulty under adverse conditions rather than making the break and removing to a more favoured region, even with government aid.

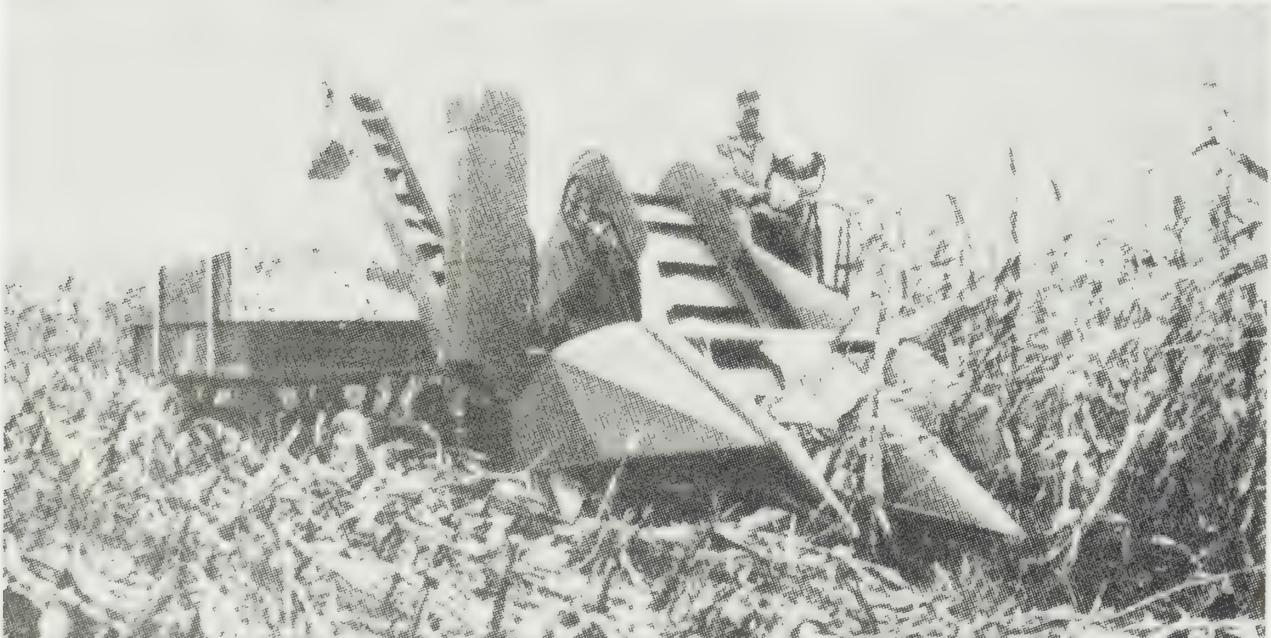
The modern farmer has often not only an up-to-the minute home with electric power, radio, television, mail delivery, telephone, refrigeration, and running water, but also labour-saving equipment in his huge barns, and tractor power for all heavy farm processes. When he ploughs great numbers of furrows at one swoop, carries on seeding and cultivation with little or no effort, and reaps and threshes in one operation with his new combine; when his cows are milked by machine and his cream separator operated by electricity; when the groceryman motors up to his door with bottled delicacies and canned goods, frozen foods and pre-cooked cereals, unheard of in pioneer days; when the drive-in theatre is but a few miles distant, and the cultural advantages of the city only an hour away, yet the hustle and bustle of city life is absent; when his wife drives off in her own car to the neighbouring shopping plaza, or to see the latest Parisian styles in Montreal, Toronto, or Detroit—then he must reflect with astonishment and satisfaction upon the days when his grandparents—even his parents—carried on the primitive and fatiguing processes of pioneering in Upper Canada.

This is a somewhat idealistic progression, of course, but an official investigation bears out particularly an advance in educational and cultural activities:

> Farm families, cut off from many sources of entertainment enjoyed by the city dwellers, develop their own cultural interests.
>
> Most are avid readers, and the busy homemaker is the person who enjoys this pastime most. And although the average family has radio, record players, and TV, many still like to develop whatever musical talents its members may have, and are proud to possess a piano, organ, or other musical instruments.
>
> This was indicated in the recent study of Ontario farm homes and homemakers made by the Home Economics branch of the Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Federal department, in which 352 farm homemakers, representing a cross-section of the province, were interviewed.
>
> The survey showed newspapers, farm periodicals, and magazines were read in 99 per cent of the homes visited. The average was nearly four farm papers per family.
>
> Magazines other than farm publications were taken regularly in 83 per cent of the homes, and 69 per cent of the families subscribed to a weekly or semi-weekly newspaper and 66 per cent to a daily paper.
>
> The number of books other than school text books in homes surveyed indicated somebody in the family, usually the homemaker, reads and enjoys books. In only 9 per cent of the homes visited was it found that no one cared about books.
>
> Indicating the musical interests of farm families, the survey showed only 25 per cent were without a musical instrument of some kind. Nearly 38 per cent had a piano; eight per cent an organ; 14 per cent a record player. But more than one-third of the homes had from two to four of these items.

CYLINDER RAKE-BAR HAY LOADER

TRACTOR-CONTROLLED WIDE-DISC HARROW



Massey-Ferguson Ltd.

SELF-PROPELLED CORN PICKER

This machine can pick and husk 20 to 30 acres per day.

Nearly all the homemakers—98 per cent—reported the family owned one or more radios in working condition at the time of the interview. Fifty-one per cent had radios in the house and one or more in a barn, car, truck, or tractor. More than three-quarters of the families had TV sets.

'Considering the wide distribution of papers, magazines, radios, and TV in these Ontario farm homes, it would seem that the majority of families on farms can be and are being reached', said Dr. Helen Abell of the Canada Department of Agriculture, who directed the three-year survey.*

But if statistics do not lie, the same cannot always be said for the deductions that people make from them. A recent letter in the press from a farmer's wife in Bethany, who was irritated by someone's suggestion that there were no financially poor farmers, is a classic statement of the long, arduous, and almost unmitigated labour necessary to evade poverty on many a farm:

My husband worked at home for 16 years. The first 12 he got his room, board, and clothing. He had no spending money, no car, no amusements except the kind country people make for themselves. His outings were to choir practice and church. The last few years his father paid him a minimum wage. At the end of that time he had his own farm, a start in livestock, and a supply of second-hand, horse-drawn implements.

Since we have been married, excluding our week's honeymoon, my husband has spent seven nights off the farm. That is seven days holidays in 10 years and on some of those days he chored before he left in the morning. There was no pay for those holidays; occasionally we had to pay somebody to look after things while we were away.

We get up at 5:30 a.m. in the winter and 5 in the summer. Ralph is often working as late as 11 p.m. and rarely calls it a day before 10. Sunday work is kept to the bare necessities, but this time of year it is at least five hours. He takes a half-hour for breakfast and dinner and rests for an hour or so after supper. At other times he is working. Often in busy seasons he must read at mealtime to keep abreast of the news and agricultural developments. There are no coffee breaks. No farmer could manage on a 48-hour week.

We raise most of what we eat. It takes a lot of hoeing to grow enough vegetables to feed four people for a year—to say nothing of the time involved canning, freezing, and preparing them for storage. I have been known to put patch upon patch upon patch on Ralph's underwear. I've just remodelled a coat so I can wear it for the sixth winter. We're not a bit too proud to wear hand-me-downs. Our car is 21 years old.

Farmers have to save some money every year because there's no pension plan for us. We have to be responsible for ourselves until we reach the old-age pension plan.

*Toronto *Globe and Mail*, January 15, 1962.

If Mrs. Kemp will dig into statistics and compare the amount of food the average hourly wage has bought over the years, she will find that food, even butter, is cheap. If farmers were working at the hourly wage that others receive and got interest on the money they have invested in their farms one just couldn't imagine what the price of butter might be.

We're not complaining. We're perfectly contented with our lot. The 'way of life' aspect of farming is worth a considerable amount. Real farmers get more joy out of watching a field of grain blowing in the wind than seeing the cash from that crop totalled in the bank account. Beyond the prosperous-looking farms there is often a lot of scrimping, saving, and hard work. A farmer has to be a rugged individual and a supreme optimist to keep farming when one considers the vagaries of the weather and the fluctuations in market prices.*

There is indeed a point of view that in some respects we have lost more than we have gained, that the pioneer was much more intimate with his land and stock, that the farmer and his family were happier when they accomplished so much without a superfluity of modern gadgets. Michael Foran of Toronto effectively develops the point in his verses on

Currier & Ives print

FARM AND FIRESIDE

Made in 1878, this print reflects the later farming by the absence of oxen and the emphasis upon machinery.

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*Letter of (Mrs. Ralph G.) Nancy Preston, Toronto *Globe and Mail,* January 16, 1962.

International Nickel Ltd. Russell Taber

THE MILK HOUSE

International Nickel Ltd. Russell Taber

CANNING

Pioneers

He never owned a combine or a tractor,
He never saw a power-driven mower;
My father cut the grain with scythe and cradle,
As men had done for centuries before.

My father split the rails that built his fences,
He walked uncounted miles behind the plow;
He drew the grain to mill with team and wagon,
He pitched the hay by hand from load to mow.

My mother baked her bread and churned her butter
With patient hands that never seemed to tire;
She made the yeast from hops, and soap from ashes,
To make a cup of tea she built a fire.

She worked unceasingly from dawn to sunset,
Day after day, no matter what befell;
She never turned a switch or pushed a button,
She carried pails of water from the well.

And yet I wonder if this age we live in,
Is better than the one that went before,
When men had never heard of atom bombing
And constant threat of suicidal war.

Our parents lived their days as God intended,
In sunlit valleys, close to birds and flowers;
In spite of all our vaunted march of science,
Their quiet lives were happier than ours.

Perhaps the least we can say is that with all its hardships and handicaps the life of the pioneer was not without its pleasures and satisfactions. If success in life is measured by achievement they were happy, and if immortality is based upon good and faithful service they will not be forgotten.

APPENDIX A

The Diary of Joseph Abbott, St. Andrews, Lower Canada

April 10, 1819 – April 10, 1820

From the third edition of his book, *The Emigrant to North America*, 1844

(Joseph Abbott, clergyman and author, was born in 1789 in Cumberland, England, and educated in Aberdeen. In 1818 he was sent to Canada as a missionary by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, residing first at St. Andrews and then at Grenville, Lower Canada, until 1847.

His articles on improved agriculture first appeared in the *Quebec Mercury*. The first edition of his memoranda was produced in Montreal in 1842 under the title *The Emigrant to North America*, and there was a second in 1843; a third, much enlarged, was published in London and Edinburgh in 1844 with the following full title:

The Emigrant to North America,
from Memoranda of a Settler in Canada.

Being a Compendium of Useful Practical Hints to Emigrants,
with an account of Every Day's Doings upon a Farm for a Year.

By an Emigrant Farmer of Twenty Years' Experience.

3rd Edition, Edinburgh and London, 1844.

Much the same material was also produced in fictional form under the title *Philip Musgrave, or Memoirs of a Church of England Missionary in the North American Colonies,* which was published in London in 1846. Joseph Abbott's eldest son, Sir John J. C. Abbott, was Prime Minister of Canada in 1891-92. Joseph Abbott died in 1863.

The year's diary that he kept from April 10, 1819, to April 10, 1820, is the most authentic account of pioneer farm life produced in that form; and the series of eight letters by Robert Stevenson to his brother John in Glasgow, written in 1843 and printed in the third edition of Abbott's book, is likewise the best thing of the kind. Describing as they do an early traveller's observations and reactions as he made his way through the settled parts of the province, they are valuable as well as an intelligent estimate of the potentialities of each region from the point of view of a prospective settler. Any explanatory footnotes inserted are initialled by the present editor. Other notes are in the originals.)

April 10th.[*] [*1819*].—Returned, with my hired man Richard, and a load with a horse and ox cart, from Montreal, forty miles, two days on the road, which is very bad, the frost not quite out of the ground—my loading all safe, consisting of the following items: a plough, 17 dls.[†]—2 axes, 8s. each—harrow teeth, 8s., for a bush harrow in shape of the letter A.—2 logging chains, 10s. each—2 scythes and stones, 9s. 8d.—1 spade, 3s.—1 shovel, 4s.—1 dung-fork, 2s. 6d.—2 steel pitch-forks, 3s. 6d. each—3 augers, 1, 1½, and 2 inches, 15s.—1 bbl. pork, 20 dls.—1 bbl. N. shore herrings, 5 dls.—2 bbls. flour, 27s. 6d. each—20 apple trees and 6 plumb trees, at 2s. each—16 gooseberry bushes and grape vines, at 1s. 3d. each, amounting to L.21 2s. 2d.

Put my apple trees, &c. into a hole in the garden—got a good cup of tea, saw my horse and oxen well taken care of, and went to bed—thus ended the first day of my new mode of life.

April 11th.—My man Richard fed and watered the cattle—got breakfast with some difficulty, owing to the want of many things we ought to have got in Montreal; we had no frying pan, for instance—herrings superb—being Sunday, went to church morning and afternoon.

April 12th.—Up at daylight—reprimanded Richard for being out too late the night before, planted my apple, plumb trees, &c. in what had been an apology for a garden—mended the fence round it—broke open our pork barrel, found it good—had some for dinner—knocked the spout off the new tea kettle, of course cracked before—worse off than ever for cooking utensils—borrowed a frying pan, and boiled potatoes for dinner in a forty gallon pot—2 cows calved, and a ewe yeaned 2 lambs.

April 13th.—Got a supply of cooking apparatus at a shop in the neighbouring village—commenced ploughing for wheat, making garden, &c. Hired another man for the summer at 10 dls. a month, same as I gave Richard—another cow calved. This was considered a very early spring, but I have since sown wheat, on this day, two years consecutively, and might have done so oftener had it been otherwise convenient.

April 14th.—Hired a housekeeper at 4 dls. a month—sowed onions, beets, sallad, &c.—new man, Charles, mending fences—drawing rails with the horse and cart—Richard still ploughing with the oxen—myself at the garden—bought four cows at 18 dls. each—2 of them calved a month before—made a harrow.

April 15th.—Sowed wheat, after washing it with brine and drying it with lime—Charles harrowed it in with the horse—four bushels (our measure, which is nearly the same as Imperial) upon 3½ acres, according to the custom of the country—planted early peas and sowed garden seeds—Richard still ploughing—two ewes yeaned.

April 16th.—Charles and myself making fence—one of the new cows calved—ploughing for potatoes and corn, first time.

[*] The 1st of this month may be considered generally as the commencement of the agricultural year.

[†] Abbreviation for dollars. At this period the currency was highly confused, and both in nomenclature and value.—*E.C.G.*

April 17th.—Finished ploughing potato and corn land.

April 18th.—Sunday.

April 19th.—Ploughing some rough land, which had been partially covered with bushes and briars, with a hog plough, a sort of an implement of very light, simple, and primitive construction without a coulter, but very useful for such a purpose, as it is easily disentangled from roots which have too firm a hold of the ground to be torn up. The price of one is about 25s., but that which I used was a borrowed one, or rather a hired one at fifteenpence a day, according to a custom which I think as good as it is common in many parts of the country.

April 20th.—Richard working away with the oxen and hog plough—Charles and I tearing up the loosened roots, and casting them off into heaps to be burnt when dry, spending a good deal of time also in getting out the oldest of the stumps, which were sufficiently decayed to be eradicated without digging round them and *stubbing* them up, which we never think of doing, but wait till they will come out like a ripe hazel nut from its husk.

April 21st.—Finished about four acres by noon, sowed it with oats and peas mixed, a common crop in this country and profitable for provender for horses or working oxen, and not amiss for fattening hogs with; better at any rate than oats alone.

April 22d.—Richard finished harrowing in the oats and peas—Charles and I at the same work as yesterday, as several roots were brought to light by the harrow which we had previously missed.

April 23d.—Blasting a few large boulders in the corn land, which had been drilled by contract at three halfpence an inch, and drawing them off with the oxen on a stone drag, a machine made of plank about three inches thick, split out of a crooked ash tree and hewed even with a curve of about six inches in its whole length (five feet), its breadth being about two feet and a half, the planks dowelled together, and a small piece of scantling pinned on across the ends and along each side, to keep it firmly together and to prevent the stones from rolling off. We made it in about four hours.

April 24th.—Finished getting off the stones, although we had two of them to blast over again, or at least portions of them which were too large to move—hard work—all went to bed very tired.

April 25th.—Sunday, a very wet day, scarcely any body at church; no sermon; fine in the afternoon.

April 26th.—Harrowed the corn and potato land, which, being of a light gravelly soil, was dry enough for the operation.

April 27th.—Called out by the surveyor of roads (an officer appointed in every section of a parish or township by the people themselves) to mend a very bad piece of road.

April 28th.—Planted three bushels of early potatoes—got out some firewood, which is always done the winter before, but this being my first year I had to do it now. I have since always had a sufficiency for a year's consumption got out beforehand, so as to have it dry and well seasoned, a matter of no small comfort and economy.

April 29th.—Drawing out what manure was thawed on the top of my dung-hills, and laying it up in a heap near my corn land, so as to allow the sun, &c. to thaw the remainder—made a hotbed in my garden for cucumbers and melons, and for rearing early cabbage plants.

April 30th.—Cleared up the front of my house, which was about twenty yards from the main road and in a very rough state, and planted three butter-nut trees (a kind of walnut)—went to an auction of household furniture, farming stock, &c. in the neighbourhood, but everything sold so high that I bought nothing except a tin horn to call us home to dinner with, a brass candlestick, and a *brush* scythe, an implement made by a common black smith, much stronger than an ordinary one, with one eye like that of a hoe in which to fix the handle, in order to answer the purpose its name implies.

May 1st.—All at work on the roads—finished our highway duty.

May 2d.—Sunday. All to church.

May 3d.—One of the men churned before breakfast, with a swing-churn* lately invented—cut up a little firewood—too warm to plough with oxen in the middle of the day—all making fence.

May 4th. and 5th.—Wet days—made four rakes, and handled the new axes, one having been partially ground and a temporary handle in it before—cleared out and repaired the barn.

May 6th.—Fine again—land too wet to plough—making fences—got the horse shod.

May 7th.—Very warm and sultry—ploughing for Indian corn by daylight, left off at 10, and commenced again at 4 P.M., continued till dark—carting stones off the corn land—finished my garden—got home the grist sent away yesterday.

May 8th.—One of the principal farmers of the settlement killed by a tree falling upon him. Work same as yesterday until noon, when we all went to assist in raising a wooden building for a barn 40 feet by 30 for one of our neighbours.

May 9th.—Sunday. All went to church—I need not again mention this, as we never allowed anything to interfere with this duty. A tremendous thunder-storm.

May 10th. and 11th.—Drawing manure for Indian corn, ploughing it in, &c.

May 12th. and 13th.—Same work as two preceding days—and planting Indian corn and pumpkins—attended funeral of the neighbour killed on the 8th.

May 14th. and 15th.—Sowed more oats and finished planting Indian corn—killed a fat calf—sold one quarter for 5s., and the skin for the same.

May 16th.—Sunday.

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*The intelligent reader might discover from this mention of the swing-churn, so lately invented, as well as from a reference to mills for making oatmeal, so recently established, that this diary was not written at the period referred to. To which I can only reply that in correcting it for the press, such important discrepancies were introduced for the better information of the Emigrant, being more in accordance with the present time.

May 17th. and 18th.—Clearing an old "slash", which term has previously been defined—drawing the logs together with the oxen, then piling and burning them.

May 19th.—At the same work with two extra hands; for "logging", as it is called, cannot be carried on to advantage with fewer than four hands, or five if the timber is heavy, as the teamster would have to assist in rolling up a log when the logs got high, and thus not only lose time with his team but keep the men waiting till he drew in another log, which he ought to have had ready on one side while the last was being put up on the other. A log pile consists, when the trees are at all of a uniform size, of five logs on the ground, four on the top of these, then three, two, and one; and when they are not uniform two are substituted for one, or sometimes three for two; and when crooked pieces are met with, which is very seldom, the holes which would be left by their lying alongside of straight ones are filled up with large chips, thick ends of branches, and pieces of old rotten logs which have not been consumed when the fire had been "*run through*" the slash to consume the underbrush, and as more than a sufficient quantity always remains, the residue is thrown upon the top of the pile or against the ends: the pile is then set on fire (generally two or three days' work, or more, is burnt at once; fifteen heaps is about a day's work for five men). The morning after two men go to every pile and roll up the burning embers closer together with handspikes, and again about six or eight hours afterwards: this occupied our time till the evening of the 21st, when I paid my two extra hands at the rate of two shillings a-day and discharged them.

May 22d.—Drew together into one heap a few remaining brands, as we term the burnt log ends left after the pile has been all but consumed, gathered up the ashes, and carted them home.

May 23d.—Sunday.—My men wanted to go in the morning to brand up the pile we had set on fire the night before, which they said was generally done in the backwoods where they came from. I thanked them for their attention to my work and endeavoured to convince them of the impropriety of such conduct, but I fear with little success. I then told them I would much rather see them getting ready to go to church, which, from the black and begrimed state of their clothes, being the same they had worn the day before, they did not seem inclined to do, and asked, with some astonishment and in a deprecatory manner, if I wished them to go to church *every* Sunday, when I told them that to neglect this duty without sufficient cause, of which I must be the judge, I should consider tantamount to a notice to quit my service. They submitted to my wishes, but one of them thought me a hard and cruel taskmaster; that one, however, is now a serious, orderly, and regular attendant at church, and a communicant, and attributes all his subsequent success in life, as well as his reformation of conduct, to such trifling instruction as I was led to give him on such occasions: thus a word in season is sometimes like bread cast upon the waters, which may appear after many days.

May 24th.—Wet day. Sheared the sheep, having got them into the barn before the rain came on—cut potatoes for seed the rest of the day. Of late years I have planted them whole, and find it decidedly preferable, for although it takes more seed, I have more than a corresponding increase of produce.

May 25th.—Planted the new clearing with Indian corn.

May 26th.—Same work as yesterday, and clearing up a little corner of the piece we had left unfinished on Saturday.

May 27th. and 28th.—Making road through a swamp preparatory to drawing out my manure for potatoes; this was almost an interminable job, and we wrought at it when ever we could snatch a day or two. We made it by laying logs across it side by side along the whole distance, some two hundred yards, and then covered them with gravel or chips from the fuel yard.

May 29th.—Went to a *logging bee*, the first and last I ever was present at; a great deal of whiskey was drank, and one man got into a passion and with a hand-spike struck another with whom he was quarrelling, and killed him on the spot. He was taken up, sent to jail, and found guilty of *murder prepense*, which was a great mystery to me, as he was evidently only guilty of manslaughter. His sentence of death, however, was commuted, probably in consideration of the circumstances, into perpetual confinement, and he is still, I believe, in Montreal jail.

May 30th.—Sunday.

May 31st.—A friend of mine, who had been to Quebec with some lathwood for the English market, returned to-day, and brought me a large silver medal which had been awarded to me by the Natural History Society, established there only the year before. I had seen in the newspapers a list of subjects upon which the best essay should receive such an honorary distinction, one of which was the agriculture of this country, which, thanks to my kind instructor, the farmer I lived with for a year, I thought I might write upon with some chance of obtaining the promised reward, which I value the more highly in consequence of its being the very first literary prize ever bestowed in the country. I should hardly have mentioned the circumstance here, however proud I might be of the honour, and I am proud of it, had it not had an intimate, although an indirect, connection with these memoirs, for it led to their first publication by convincing me that a plain farmer even, like me, might venture to obtrude himself, as an author, upon the public, in the hope of conveying some useful information, provided he confined himself to a subject he fully understood.* Finished the road through the swamp, so far at least as to make it answer my present purpose—improved it much since by occasional labour.

June 1st. and 2nd.—Sowing 1½ acre of oats on the clearing; Richard ploughing the potato land second time; Charles drawing out manure and spreading it before him; myself planting potatoes with a hoe, after him; it may be here remarked that before the stumps are all out, or nearly so, it is not possible to drill up land for this crop.

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*This is a very sensible observation, and many would-be authors, who do most unmercifully "*obtrude*" themselves upon the public, would do well to take a hint from it. It reminds us of some very pertinent remarks in an article (on Deer Stalking) in a late number of the Edinburgh Review.—*Quebec Mercury.*

June 3d.—Finished the potatoes and reckoned up my crop stands as follows: wheat 3½, peas 3, oats 5, Indian corn 6, potatoes 5½—in all, 23 acres—meadow 20, pasture 13, partially cleared 20, added to the 23, makes 76 acres. It may be remembered here that I said my farm contained about 50 acres of cleared land, whereas I make out 76 acres, but I did not then take into the account either the 20 acres partially cleared or the 6 or 7 I cleared myself.

June 4th.—A holiday, which I have always kept in commemoration of the birth of good King George the III of blessed memory.

June 5th.—Went to a training, as it is here called. All the men in the country, with some trifling exceptions, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, capable of bearing arms, are obliged by law to muster once a-year; and this constitutes the militia of the Province.

June 6th.—Sunday. I witnessed on this evening a splendid and gorgeous sunset, far surpassing any thing of the kind I had ever seen at home. Even a sunset in Italy, as a Commissariat Officer settled on a farm near me, who had served in that country, declared, could not be compared to it.

June 7th.—All hands cutting timber for making new fences and mending old ones.

June 8th.—Hauling out of the *bush* with oxen the timber cut yesterday, and my two men cutting more.

June 9th.—Same work. This ought all to have been done in the winter on the snow, and I have taken care ever since to have it done thus.

June 10th.—Still drawing fencing timber with oxen, but my men splitting it into rails, making blocks, pickets, or stakes, &c.

June 11th.—Mending fences round my pasture, and on each side of a public road intersecting my farm a short distance from the front of my house.

June 12th.—Making a small portion of new fence to prolong the line or division fence between me and my next neighbour, beyond my little new clearing into the edge of a thickly wooded swamp, as all swamps are in this country, all, at least, that I have seen. This was what is called a log fence, such as is generally first made after clearing the land; as many of the smaller logs supply its material, hence its name. In after years others of various descriptions are substituted. In Western Canada [*i.e.*, Upper Canada] seven or eight small rails about twelve feet long are piled up with their ends across each other at something more than a right angle, but we in this part of the country, and good farmers every where, prefer a post and rail fence, not however such as is made in England; the post is half of a cedar log, of about ten inches diameter and six feet four inches long, with five holes 3½ inches square cut through it with a narrow axe called a post-axe, something like the felling-axe at home but neither so long nor so heavy, and the rails are spliced in the holes, not on the top of each other but side by side, and both the posts and rails are split or "riven", if the latter word, which is excluded from our vocabulary, may be used. The posts are put into holes about two feet deep. But when stones abound in the land and have to be carted off, they are made into a rude wall about two feet high, in which case two rails can be dispensed with and the posts need not be so long, as they do not require to be put so deep into the ground owing to the support they derive from the broad-bottomed stone wall. This is decidedly the best fence that can be made.

June 13th.—Sunday.

June 14th.—Found a swarm of bees in a hollow tree in the woods, which was claimed by a bee-hunter, who however renounced his right to my superior title, he only having marked the tree while I was the owner of it. Much as the habits of this wonderful and useful little insect have been studied, and that with the most successful results, there is one, and I have never seen it mentioned in any dissertation on the subject, upon which the bee-hunter implicitly depends for his successful search after its honeyed treasures, and he is seldom disappointed. Whenever he finds a bee he catches it, and puts it into a little box with a glass cover to it and keeps it there for a day or two, when he gives it as much honey as it chooses to take, and then opens the box and allows it to fly away, but he marks the road it takes and follows it, but days, or weeks, or even months may elapse before he does so, when he is almost sure to find its home with a rich treasure there, sometimes of even a hundred weight of honey; but instances have been known when he has had to travel more than six miles before he reached the spot. From which it is evident that the bee, when starved for a day or two, and then filled with honey and permitted to escape, in the most exact sense of the word, goes *straight* home. Sometimes, and that not unfrequently, he finds that it takes its flight to a settled part of the country, but almost every settlement is bounded on one side or another by the wild interminable wilderness of woods, and in that direction alone does he follow it. Cutting down the tree, cross-cutting it above and below the swarm with a saw, getting it home after being all of us well stung, setting it up as a hive with a board at each end, and fomenting our swollen hands and faces, occupied the greatest part of the day, and as it turned out it was far from unprofitably employed, as I have now a valuable stock from it.

June 15th.—Put up a small building behind my garden, which, although not always to be found on a farmstead in this country, is not on that account the less *necessary*.

June 16th.—Hoeing Indian corn—very, very hot.

June 17th.—Bathed early in morning, a great luxury—hotter still. My men would eat no meat at dinner today, preferring milk and butter; but nothing will ever induce working men in this country to forego their meat breakfast. I thought it very odd when first I came to see the fat pork fried, and potatoes boiled or warmed up, for breakfast. I once asked an Irishman I had working for me, why he would not live upon potatoes and salt in this country, as well as in his own? His reply was, "An' sure, and doesn't the *hate* of the climate require stronger food?" Well, but in the winter, I rejoined, "An' troth, and don't ye *thin* want something substantial to keep the *cauld* away from your heart?" Still hoeing Indian corn.

June 18th.—Finished hoeing corn—were something longer at this work in consequence of doling out a barrel of plaster-of-paris, or gypsum, which I got for a dollar from Gananoque mills, upon an acre and a quarter of the poorest of it, by a table-spoonful to each hill. This is a manure which is very valuable in this country, not only in consequence of its cheapness and efficiency but chiefly from the little labour required in applying it; a very material and important consideration when labour is dearer than land, a circumstance which exercises an overwhelming influence upon all agricultural operations.

June 19th.—Harrowed my potatoes with a light English harrow, in the same manner as is done in the old country, as well as in this, when ploughed in or in drills. Cattle broke out of the pasture, and consequently employed the rest of the day in mending the fence.

June 20th.—Sunday. Thermometer 86 in the shade.

June 21st.—Sowed half an acre of Swedish turnips (Ruta Baga) on my new clearing, and hoed them in. This is necessary, as the scurf upon the new land cannot be sufficiently broken by harrowing to allow the root to expand, and ploughing being out of the question, owing to the ground being so matted, if I may so term it, with *live* or green roots that two years must elapse before it can be at all scratched up with a plough: but the most profitable crops are obtained while the land continues in that state; which, in the estimation of an old countryman, would be considered untillable and almost useless; larger crops, it must be admitted, may be produced after every impediment to cultivation has been removed, but if the interest upon the capital sunk in bringing it into this higher state of culture be deducted out of its proceeds, the assertion will be found a correct one.

June 22d.—Clearing up half an acre more for white turnips (the globe). It may be remarked from the little attention paid to this crop that it is not considered of so much consequence as at home; and this is really the case, as we cannot cultivate them to the same perfection because the winter sets in too early and is too severe to preserve them in large quantities without too much trouble. We therefore only grow a few for our cows and ewes in the spring, to assist in producing a supply of milk for their young before the grass comes.

June 23d.—Sowing and hoeing in the white turnips.

June 24th.—An old rotten wooden conduit to convey a little run of water across my road having broken in, we took it all out and replaced it with a permanent stone one.

June 25th. and 26th.—Finishing our *bridge* across the road.

June 28th.—Commenced hoeing potatoes, found them hardly large enough to hill up, and consequently gave up this work at night in order to allow them a few days more.

June 29th.—Making fences and a drain from the sink at the back door.

June 30th.—Finished our drain with great satisfaction, as it did away with a nasty dirty mudhole—hoeing Indian corn the second time.

July 1st.—Hoeing potatoes, which we found had increased in size wonderfully since Monday.

July 2d. and 3d.—Same work, with an extra hand, in order to finish before haying, which, however, we did not quite accomplish.

July 4th.—Sunday.

July 5th.—Wet day— ground scythes and *hung* them.

July 6th.—Commenced mowing.

July 15th.—Finished haying without a drop of rain—very hot.

July 16th.—A fearful thunder-storm—burned a log-barn in the neighbourhood, or, as some suppose, the accident happened from a man going into it with a lighted pipe, to prevent which has been a great source of trouble to me whenever I have employed Canadian labourers —killed another fat calf.

July 17th.—Finished off my hay-stacks.

July 18th.—Sunday. To church—clergyman absent at a distant settlement—prayers, and a sermon read by the schoolmaster—weather quite cool, as is usual after a violent thunder-storm.

July 19th.—Commenced hoeing corn the third time, or rather cutting up with the hoe whatever weeds had grown since the last hoeing—sold 200 lbs. butter at 8d. per lb.—cut first cucumber.

July 20th. to end of month.—Finishing hoeing corn and potatoes—commenced clearing new land by cutting down under brush and piling it in heaps ready for burning—this I did upon 30 acres of woodland during the rest of the summer, when I found I could spare a day for that purpose, and in the winter cut down the large trees, and then into lengths for piling in heaps to burn. The summer is the best season for commencing to clear land, because the brush is in full leaf, which, when dry, helps to burn it, all of which a person soon learns when he comes to the country but would doubtless like to know something about it before.

August 2d.—Attending a meeting of the principal inhabitants about repairing the roof of the church steeple; gave a dollar towards the expense—bought a pew, L.6—The two men underbrushing—first new potatoes—bought a sickle and a cradle scythe—made the cradle, having had the fingers blocked out before—a very difficult thing to make.

August 4th. to 7th.—Clearing part of the underbrushed land for winter wheat—same until 10th, when I began reaping and cradling—continued till 21st.—finished harvesting, except 1¼ acre of late oats and the Indian corn—cut first melon, but I am very late.

August 31st.—Resumed clearing land—killed a lamb.

September 1st. to 10th.—Same work, and sowed three acres of winter wheat—commenced making potash from the ashes I had saved when clearing the land.

September 11th. to 22d.—At the underbrushing—continued at the potash till I made two barrels, which I sold for something over L.15—my neighbour's cattle broke into my Indian corn but did little damage.

September 23d.—Wet day—threshing and dressing up 1½ bushels wheat and 8 of oats—sent them to mill at night—oats weighed 48 lbs. the bushel.

September 24th.—Got home grist—oats produced 2 cwt. 0 qr. 14 lbs. —got a certificate from the miller and a farmer of the weight of the oats, 40 lbs. being the general average weight of good oats—made a wooden box as a steamer for my boiler—box containing 12 bushels.

September 25th.—Commenced ploughing—had a cow dried up and bled, and turned into the best feed to make beef. An ox belonging to my neighbour, being one of the cattle which broke into my corn, died of a surfeit, as was supposed, of such rich succulent food as the green corn. This made him mend his portion of the line fence between my farm and his, which I never could get him to do before.

September 27th.—Commenced steaming pumpkins for my hogs—shut them up—threshed 5 bushels of peas and oats, had them ground to mix with the pumpkins—fed the hogs with raw food for some weeks before—made a hog-trough by hollowing out a pine log—went to a squirrel hunt which I must give some account of.

Some years, when the nuts in the woods are plentiful, the squirrels are so numerous as to do great damage to the Indian corn, when a conspiracy like the following is entered into for the destruction of them, as well as of all enemies that may be met with whose depredations are chiefly confined to this valuable crop. All the men, young and old, for miles round, form themselves into two bands, each under a captain, and which ever gets the least quantity of game has to pay for a ball and supper at the village tavern for the whole—each kind of animal being reckoned according to its importance; thus the right paw of a bear counts for 400—of a racoon 100—squirrel 1—right claw of a crow, woodpecker, or blue jay 1, &c. By daylight of the morning of muster the woods were all alive with the eager hunters, and in the afterpart of the day the fields were swarming with groups of women and children with provisions and ammunition for their several partizans and to disburden them of their spoils. It was truly a season of merry and joyous holiday, in which all business and work were suspended; many a small party spent sleepless nights watching for bears and racoons, for it is only then they come out. This lasted for three days, when we all met at the tavern to count up our spoils in trembling anxiety for the award of two judges appointed to decide upon the claim for victory. The party I belonged to had 2 bears, counting 800—4 racoons, 400—473 squirrels —27 crows—105 blue jays and woodpeckers—counting altogether 1,835, and yet we lost, as the other party had nearly the same besides one bear more.

> "The child may rue that is unborn,
> The hunting of that day."

September 30th.—Richard ploughing—Charles and I gathering Indian corn—at night had a "bee", a term used for a mustering together of the neighbours to assist in any work which would puzzle an individual to do alone, when all the young men and boys in the settlement came to help me to husk it. Got the first premium for it from the Agricultural Society.

October 1st. and 2nd.—Same work—evening to husking bee at a neighbour's.

October 4th. to 7th.—Ploughing—finished getting in the Indian corn—cutting the corn stalks—husking ourselves, at night, what little we had gathered during the day—collected and brought home pumpkins.

October 8th. to 9th.—Binding corn stalks, and stacking them up to dry—collected and got in pumpkins.

October 11th.—Got in remainder of pumpkins and the onions.

October 12th.—Stacked corn stalks and fenced them round, together with the hay stack.

October 13th.—Commenced digging potatoes.

October 14th. to 20th.—Finished taking up potatoes—800 bushels—ploughed over the land to the end of the month—ploughing—clearing land, &c.—hired Charles for the winter for seven dollars a month.

October 22d.—The boundless, measureless forest—the stupendous wilderness of woods—which overwhelms the whole face of the country, exhibited in the bright sunshine and the pure atmosphere of this lovely morning a picture as novel as it was beautiful in the eyes of a stranger; for instead of waving their luxuriant foliage over mountain, hill, and valley in the same rich though monotonous hue of living green, the trees now had assumed a colouring which, in brilliancy and variety, exceeded all description. The soft maple is the first to commence this gorgeous display by changing to a rich crimson; the sugar maple then follows in similar though more sombre tints, variegated with the yellow of the trembling poplar, the orange and gold of the beech, and the sere brown of the butternut, while the sturdy oak still maintains his deep green in defiance of those harbingers of winter.

November 1st.—Getting in turnips and cabbages, and all other garden stuffs—took in the cows at night—350 bushels turnips.

November 2d.—First hard frost—could not plough till noon—clearing, &c.

November 3rd.—Frost continuing—no more ploughing I suppose—cutting fire-wood, a kind of work I have had to do at this season since, as all provident good managers always take care to have a sufficiency for a full year's consumption drawn home and piled up at the door the winter before.

November 4th.—Cleaning out and repairing the stables, sheds, &c.—took the cows in at night.

November 5th.—Fine weather—cattle out all day—got my horse sharp shod and an axe jumped—that is new steeled—which cost me four shillings and sixpence with the grinding. I am reminded of the last circumstance by the poor blacksmith having been found dead shortly afterwards at the tail of the water wheel which drives his grindstone. The body was dreadfully bruised and mangled. It appeared that he had been attempting to do some repairs upon it, when, from some leakage in his sluice, the baskets had been gradually filling, and the rest of the machinery having been thrown out of gears it had moved round with great velocity, when he had been jammed through a very narrow space between it at the end of the flume. It was a sad accident and created quite a mournful sensation throughout the settlement.

November 6th.—New handled my jumped axe, and underbrushing in the afternoon—had to attend the Coroner's inquest as a juror on the body of poor Turnbull—verdict, accidental death.

November 7th.—In the afternoon attended the funeral of the unfortunate blacksmith at the Presbyterian Church to which he belonged—heard a very excellent and edifying discourse on the shortness and uncertainty of life, from a very appropriate text: "Man that is born of a woman is of a few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not."—*Job.* This sad event created a much greater sensation throughout the settlement in consequence of its having been the third fatal accident within the year; indeed so many had not occurred before during the residence of the oldest inhabitants.

November 8th.—A thaw—called upon my old neighbour and friend to ascertain if he would join me in purchasing a Leicestershire ram, which he consented to do and commissioned me to go off to a distant settlement where I had heard there was one for sale. His wife and daughter were busy sowing onions in the garden. My men off on a hunting excursion, having heard of a bear* in the neighbourhood; found him, and had a long but unsuccessful chase.

November 9th.—My men off again after the bear—one of them indeed did not come home but had been watching for him with another young man of his acquaintance all night; and not being very busy I did not care anything about their losing a day or two, as they had been so diligent and attentive to their work till the whole of my crops were housed—went after my ram and bought him for fourteen dollars, and a splendid sheep he is. I also bought a three year old ewe of the same breed for eight dollars. I may as well mention here that I had very bad luck with this ewe and her progeny—the first year she had only one lamb, which was so very fat and lazy that it was always the hindmost of the flock, and one day a mad dog came across my pasture (a very rare occurrence), ran after the sheep, and bit the first it could catch, which, of course, was my pet lamb, but the slight wound it inflicted healed up and I thought it was doing well and past all danger, when, after more than a month had elapsed, it went mad and died—the following year she had no lamb, the next she had one, and I kept her two more without any farther increase, and then killed her—she was very fat and weighed twenty-five pounds a quarter. Her daughter has a fine lamb this year, so that I hope yet to make amends for my bad luck.

November 10th.—My men returned from their hunt not altogether unsuccessful, for although they did not succeed in killing the bear they captured one of her cubs, which was tamed and kept for some years, and became a great pet with the whole family. They also killed a racoon, which was very fat and not of a bad flavour; it weighed, I mean the meat, about 16 lbs.—little work done to-day.

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*Some twenty years subsequently to this a bear was seen trotting quietly past my house, when three of my own boys, the oldest not sixteen years of age and the only one with a gun or other weapon, offensive or defensive, started off after him in full cry, with the same fearless eagerness as a pack of hounds after a hare; one of the younger ones got ahead of him and by pelting him with stones turned him from his course, but not in the direction of his brother who had the gun, so he got off unscathed. Some old countrymen, under the influences of those silly prejudices imbibed at home, scampering off out of his way in the most abject fear instead of joining the boys in their merry chase, constituted the most amusing feature in the scene.

November 11th.—All commenced work again at the underbrushing with renewed alacrity, in consequence of our late negligence. One of my poorer neighbours had his house burnt, and lost his little all, as well as his other *awls*, for he was a shoemaker.

November 12th.—All hands, with the horse, went to a Bee to assist in rebuilding the house burnt yesterday. It was a general rising throughout the settlement—even the women made themselves useful in preparing and bringing provisions to the place. One small party was in the woods cutting down the timber, followed by a couple of hands to line it out, then came the scorers and hewers, and at their heels again the teamsters, with oxen and horses to haul it to the place where five men put it up as fast as if it was brought to them, and after a day spent apparently more in fun and frolic than in hard labour the out-shell of a capital log-house, with the exception of a roof, was put up.

November 13th.—Richard went again to assist a few of the neighbours to put up the rafters of the house built yesterday, when they boarded it also and cut out places for door and windows—some furnished boards, others shingles, a carpenter the door and sashes, and the store-keeper the glass, putty, nails, &c., all of which the man paid for in work at his trade in the course of the following six months.

November 15th.—Richard made a new hog-trough, the old one being too small—myself and Charles underbrushing. At night all went to my friend's house to peel apples for drying.

November 16th.—Banking up my house with sand to keep the frost out of the cellar—my men cutting firewood.

November 17th. and 18th.—Underbrushing for the last time this season, having thus gone over as much land as I think I shall be able to clear. This work cannot be done well when there's any snow on the ground, and cannot be done at all when there's much.

November 19th.—*The* dark day, as it was afterwards designated in the almanack, as well as elsewhere whenever it has since been mentioned.

The sun rose in a dim yellow smoky haze, but we could see that it *had* risen, or we might afterwards have entertained a doubt on the subject; about 10 o'clock A.M., the smoke—or whatever it was, but it looked like smoke—became so dense that we could neither see the sun nor distinguish his whereabouts, and the darkness was evidently increasing; at noon daylight was all but gone, the fowls went to roost, and a Dutch farmer's family near me, who had no clock, were milking their cows; two hours later and an Egyptian darkness, a darkness that might be felt, involved every thing in the obscurity of a moonless midnight; there was not a breath of air to stir even the sered and dead leaves of the beech, and the thick smoke seemed as if it would produce a suffocating effect; but it was not really felt, which led me to suppose it was confined to the higher regions. About 1 o'clock P.M. a sudden and very violent flash of lightning, mingling with the yellow tinge of departing light, instantly succeeded by a deafening peal of thunder, produced a most startling effect upon people's minds, wrought up as they were to the highest pitch of fearful expectation of some dreadful catastrophe. The inhabitants of Montreal, as we afterwards heard, were thrown into still greater consternation on perceiving that the spire of their great church was in flames, having been set on fire by the lightning. The next morning a yellow sulphureous-looking powder, without either taste or smell, slightly covered the ground.

Some attributed the phenomena to the burning of the prairies in the far West, while others assigned a very different cause; but I do not think it has ever been satisfactorily accounted for. One thing, however, may with certainty be said of it, that it stands alone, without a repetition and without a parallel, in the meteorological history of this country as "THE DARK DAY".

November 20th.—Searching in the woods for a tree with a proper turn near the root to make a pair of runners for an ox sled—found one—but it proved unsound at the heart, which we did not discover till we got it home, when we had to go after another; this took Richard and me all day—Charles putting stables to right.

November 21st.—First snow—took in all the cattle.

November 22d.—A thaw and wet day—threshing more grain for the hogs—sent it to the mill.

November 23d. to 30th.—Ploughing again one day—clearing—killed a sheep, hard frost again, but fine weather called the Indian Summer, with a slight smoky haziness in the atmosphere, through which the sun is seen with a deadened lustre—something like a full moon.

December 1st. to 4th.—Indian Summer continues—clearing and chopping.

December 5th.—Killed my hogs.

December 6th.—Fall of snow—threshing—cutting up and salting pork.

December 7th.—Drawing wood home for fuel, in the log, with the horses and oxen, not being snow enough to draw it on the sled.

December 8th. and 9th.—Made an ox sled—cutting firewood.

December 10th. and 11th.—Drawing firewood, as on the 7th.

December 13th.—Snow storm—threshing.

December 14th.—Drawing in stack of corn-stalks to give to the cattle instead of hay, which I cannot yet get at in my barns, it being covered with grain, and not wishing to cut into my hay-stack till I should have room enough to take it all in at once.

December 15th.—Commenced cutting down the trees on the land I had underbrushed, and chopping them into lengths for piling.

December 16th. to 18th.—Same work—feeding and watering cattle—cutting a supply of firewood at the door, cleaning out the stables, &c. occupied a little of our time while the breakfast was being got ready, when we came home to dinner, and at night after finishing our day's work. The horse was always groomed, fed, &c. with candle-light after supper, when the working oxen had also a little fresh hay given them.

All which having to be attended to in the same way every day during winter, I shall not again advert to it.

December 19th. Sunday.—Six double and nine single sleighs at church. Old Mr Tenny broke the finest string of his bass viol, which created a good deal of confusion among the singers, enough to engross the whole conversation in the settlement during the following week. He was quite an original character, I mean this Mr Tenny, he was by trade a carpenter, and a clever and ingenious one; an enthusiast in psalmody, he led the singing in the church, made himself this his own bass viol, played upon it and sung to it, taught the whole settlement all they knew of sacred music, built all the houses and barns in it—plastered the houses—cut the stone for the fireplaces, and built them—made all the furniture—in short he was the father of the settlement in every point of view, besides that which entitled him to this distinctive appellation, being the oldest man in it.

Poor old Father Tenny!—unfortunately he was poor—he has since gone to his long home, sadly missed and universally lamented! Although by no means an educated man, he was naturally and intuitively a scientific mechanic. I remember his shewing me plans, with explanatory remarks, proving most satisfactorily that "I", to use his own words, "a man of 70, could, with the tools at his command, have transported the enormous canoe of Robinson Crusoe to the creek, and launched it on the ocean. I thought, when I was a little boy, that this was a blunder of De Foe's, and I think so still."

December 20th.—Commenced making a one-horse sleigh—Richard, who was half a carpenter, as well as myself, assisting in the work—Charles "chopping" in the "bush" on my intended new clearing.

December 21st.—Same work—part of the time Charles cutting firewood.

December 25th.—Visited by my old friend and neighbour, with whom I spent the greater part of my first year in Canada, who came not only to salute me with the compliments of the season, but to invite me to join his family party, after church, at their Christmas dinner, which, under the peculiar circumstances of which the reader has already received a hint, I was nothing loath to do. He had a capital dinner, although it consisted of heterodox materials for the occasion, but not being fastidious I was quite satisfied and made very well out with roast turkey and plum-pudding, closing with just the sort of cheese I like, that is, possessing a *decided* character, washed down with a tumbler of the old man's (*own*) best sparkling cider. Wine too there was, and of good quality, of which all slightly partook in order to pay due honour to some appropriate and seasonable toast after dinner; the old man went fast asleep as was his wont, his wife was busied in her household affairs, and his two nephews—the only guests besides myself—went off somewhere or other to see their acquaintances, all of which afforded his daughter Harriet (the reader little knows how I like the name) and me an opportunity of holding a long private conversation upon a subject, the nature of which, although of the deepest interest to us both, must be kept a profound secret from the reader. Before I left the house the two nephews returned and kindly invited me to a party of young people they intended to have for a dance on New Year's Eve.

December 27th. to 30th.—Hurrying on with my sleigh in order to have it ready for the party—Richard helping me—Charles "keeping his Christmas holiday"—got my sleigh finished in time, ironed, painted, and dried, which last would have been the most difficult part of the story at this season of the year had I not managed, by taking out one of the windows in my kitchen, to get it snugly ensconced in a corner near the cooking stove.

December 31st.—Went to the party in my new sleigh accompanied by her who afterwards became the affectionate sympathiser in all my sorrows, and the happy participator in all my prosperity—had a glorious dance and a beautiful drive home by moonlight afterwards.

January 1st. [*1820*].—A holiday. Drove out my old friend and his family with his own pair of bays to see his friends who had given the party the night before, where we dined.

January 8th.—This week "loafing", which means doing nothing.

January 15th.—A thaw and one wet day—all men at work again, hewing timber for a new barn.

January 22d.—Same work as last week—finished barn-timber.

January 29th.—Cutting and drawing home firewood, there having been fortunately a great fall of snow in the beginning of the week, which made good roads.

February 5th.—Hauling out the barn-timber—cutting and drawing timber logs to the saw-mill for boards to case round and cover the barn.

February 12th.—Same work as last week.

February 19th.—Cutting, splitting, and drawing rails for fences—went to town with my butter and a few bushels of grain, which I sold, and bought groceries, hinges, nails for my new barn, as well as other trifling necessaries preparatory to my anticipated change of circumstances.

February 26th.—My men cutting and drawing home timber for shingles, except one day, when a certain event of no small importance, in my own little history at least, took place, which was a holiday for every body belonging to the two families most interested in it.

March 4th.—Busy with all hands in overturning and new arranging every thing in the house and about it, adding a hundred little items essentially necessary for our comfort and convenience which I had never missed before.

March 11th.—Two or three days occupied in preparing for a large party of my wife's friends and acquaintances, which, in accordance with a good old custom, we had to give; and being our first we had to be more particular, knowing how narrowly our little establishment would be scrutinized, especially by the young women, who were all anxiously looking forward to the time when their turn should come to do the same thing.

March 18th.—Cutting and drawing firewood—getting in a stack of hay.

March 25th.—Fine mild sunshiny weather—snow roads getting bad, nearly done with them, however—making maple sugar.

April 1st.—Cloudy weather and hard frost—finished getting out firewood enough for not only the summer but the ensuing winter—made maples, molasses, and vinegar—season nearly over.

April 10th.—Making shingles—snow nearly gone—and my year ended.

APPENDIX B

The Letters of Robert Stevenson, 1843

(These letters, which appeared in the third edition, 1844, of Joseph Abbott's *The Emigrant to North America*, form the best series relative to conditions in the various settled parts of Canada West (Ontario) in the eighteen-forties. As they are written from the point of view of a potential settler, they are particularly valuable as an estimate of the comparative attractions of various parts of the province; while the introduction of the Scottish vernacular from time to time adds to their attractiveness and lends an air of authenticity. Whenever a comment is critically forthright, it is of the whimsical, good-humoured, tongue-in-cheek variety.

Their writer, Robert Stevenson, is described by Abbott as 'a plain, practical Scotsman, an Ayrshire emigrant'. All of them were addressed to his brother John, 'a mechanic in Glasgow'. The present editor has inserted headings, sometimes topical but largely to indicate the main geographical locations, and a number of illustrations appropriate to the text.)

LETTER I

My Dear Brother,

As I promised to write you anent every thing, just as it happened, I shall not trouble you with any attempt to arrange and classify, or to divide my letters into heads, as our worthy minister used to do his preachings; I shall just note down every thing as it happened, even foot foremost.

CROSSING THE OCEAN

When I wrote you last from Greenock I thought we should have sailed the next day, as the ship lay at the tail of the bank; but as the wind was contrary we were delayed two days longer—so, as I was leaving my native country, perhaps for ever, I considered that I ought to see as much of it as possible, and therefore I took advantage of our second mate's proceeding to Port-Glasgow to take farewell of his friends, to accompany him to behold the wonders of that celebrated place.

Travellers are proverbially given not to *under*state what they see in far away parts, and so I found by experience, for the Port-Glasgow steeple, so far from slanting over like the hanging tower of Sargossa in the Penny Magazine, is just a wee thocht ajee. From canny and cautious investigation—for it is a ticklish subject with them—I found that it is a real fact that they first painted their grand bell, which deadened the sound, and then boiled it to take off the paint; but they succeeded no better in this than in another boiling ploy they had about this time. Ye see, a young man from the town set off to Jamaica, and in course of time became a grand planter; so he sent home to the magistrates of his native town a queer kind of beast of the shell-fish kind called a turtle. Now the magistrates had heard that the Lord Provost and Bailies of London thocht it a great dainty, for it made noble soup. Accordingly they put it bodily into the same tar pot they had used for the bell, with plenty of barley and cabbage; but it would not turn red like a lobster, as they supposed it would, and the kail, though they supped all for fashion's sake, they said was but indifferent, and as for the flesh it was tasteless, and they would have greatly preferred a gigot of mutton.

The next day at four in the afternoon we might have sailed, but the Captain would not hear of it, being a Friday; but on Saturday we got under weigh before day-light in the morning with a fine easterly breeze, which, the mate told me, always blows about the time of the Greenock spring preachings,* and by the time it was good day-light we were passing the Auld Kirk.

GOOD-BYE TO SCOTLAND

As the wind was rather off the land we sailed close under the Ayrshire coast, and you may be sure I never took my eyes off it while it could be distinguished from the sky. Oh, it is a sore and a heart-sinking thing to take the last look of a land that is endeared to us by so many remembrances—gradually to lose sight of the farm where we were born—the village at which we went to school—the woods and glens in which we played—the burns in which we "paidled"—the kirk in which we were christened, and where we first heard in public the word of God, and under whose shadow is the turf that covers the mouldering bones of our parents, blessed be their memory! But for their pious instructions I should have sunk in despair, but they early taught me to put my trust in HIM whose arm is not shortened, and who can throw the shield of His protecting providence over me and cause His staff and His rod to support me equally in the wild forests of Canada as on the sunny slopes and shady glens of my native land.

I did not recover my spirits all that day; for, do what I would, sad thoughts would thrust themselves into my breast, but at night I prayed fervently and felt relieved; next morning we had lost sight of land, having gone round the north of Ireland in the night, and in the morning

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*The spring celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—the middle or end of March. The mate was correct.—*Quebec Mercury.*

we were standing onward with a fine steady breeze and a moderately smooth sea. Many of our passengers were sorely afflicted with sea-sickness, which is a most grievous dispensation, but I who have been so often at Arran and Campbelltown was in a manner seasoned, and suffered but little.

I shall not trouble you with a minute account of the voyage. Like all other voyages it was wearisome; sometimes we had calms and sometimes gales, but I have reason to believe it was not much better or worse than most passages across the Atlantic. We were told at starting that we should be thankful if we were not over six weeks—we were four days over it but I was thankful notwithstanding.

AT QUEBEC

We arrived at Quebec on the 15th of May, and I was just landed when I foregathered with one Mr. Corbett, a gawcy, sponsible looking man from Straven who is agent for the Canada Company. We took half a mutchkin together, and never was time better bestowed, for he told me more about the country in half an hour than I could have learned from all the books that ever were written on the subject, and he gave me a wee map of the province, which, in the long run, will turn out to be very useful. He advised me to go well west, for there was little good land on this side of Toronto. He said the best land was in the Huron district, but advised me to look for myself.

When I told him that I was sent to look for land for some families in the neighbourhood of Irvine and the parishes thereunto adjoining, he was then more kind than ever and gave me letters to all the Canada Company's agents, and advised me not to stay a minute in a big town, where I would spend more money in a day than would keep me in the woods for a week. Accordingly he took me to the steamboat, the captain of which was a friend of his, and in her I proceeded to this place.

I would fain give you a description of Quebec, but I only saw it from the river, for I was not farther up the hill than the Neptune Inn; but if ye can imagine the Craig of Ailsa on the banks of a river a mile broad ye may have some notion of it, only it has houses stuck to it like swallows' nests to a wall, and fortifications bristling with cannons to the very top.

QUEBEC TO MONTREAL

Oh, man, but it's a beautiful country between Quebec and this. The bonny white farm-houses in the middle of their orchards, which are now in full bloom, the grand elm-trees on the banks of the river, that would look grand even in my Lord Eglinton's park, and the beautiful kirks at every three or four miles, with their tinned steeples glancing in the sun. What a pity that the poor deluded creatures that worship therein should drink the cup of the abominations of the red harlot of Babylon! Oh, that we could but send out our minister, and a dozen or two more of the right sort from Ayrshire where they have the root of the matter, to shake them over the pit and frighten them from the errors of their ways! Pray, my dear John, that these days may come, when all

Public Archives of Canada James Pattison Cockburn

NEPTUNE INN, QUEBEC

mankind may come into the only true fold, the Kirk of Scotland, and believe me your affectionate brother,

Endorsed: Robert Stevenson,

To Mr. John Stevenson, Cordwainer,
Care of Deacon M^{c}Awl,
Hutchison Street, Glasgow.

Montreal.

LETTER II

My Dear Brother,

On the Sabbath I remained in Montreal, and I went to the kirk in St Peter Street, where I heard a most weighty discourse from Dr. Mathieson. He's a Boanarges[†] yon, and toots the Lord's trumpet in a manner to shake the ramparts of Satan's kingdom, even as those of Jericho were shaken before the rams' horns of the priests carrying the ark of the covenant. In the afternoon I attended the ministrations of Doctor Black (I could never fathom the reason why, when ministers are getting auld and doited, they aye call them doctor) who is equally orthodox but not so awakening.

UP THE ST. LAWRENCE BY BATEAU

I proceeded up the Lachine Canal, which takes us safely round a *rapid* as they call it in this country, that is, where the river tumbles over rocks at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. It's awful to look at, and to think of the danger of the poor creatures that bring down rafts of

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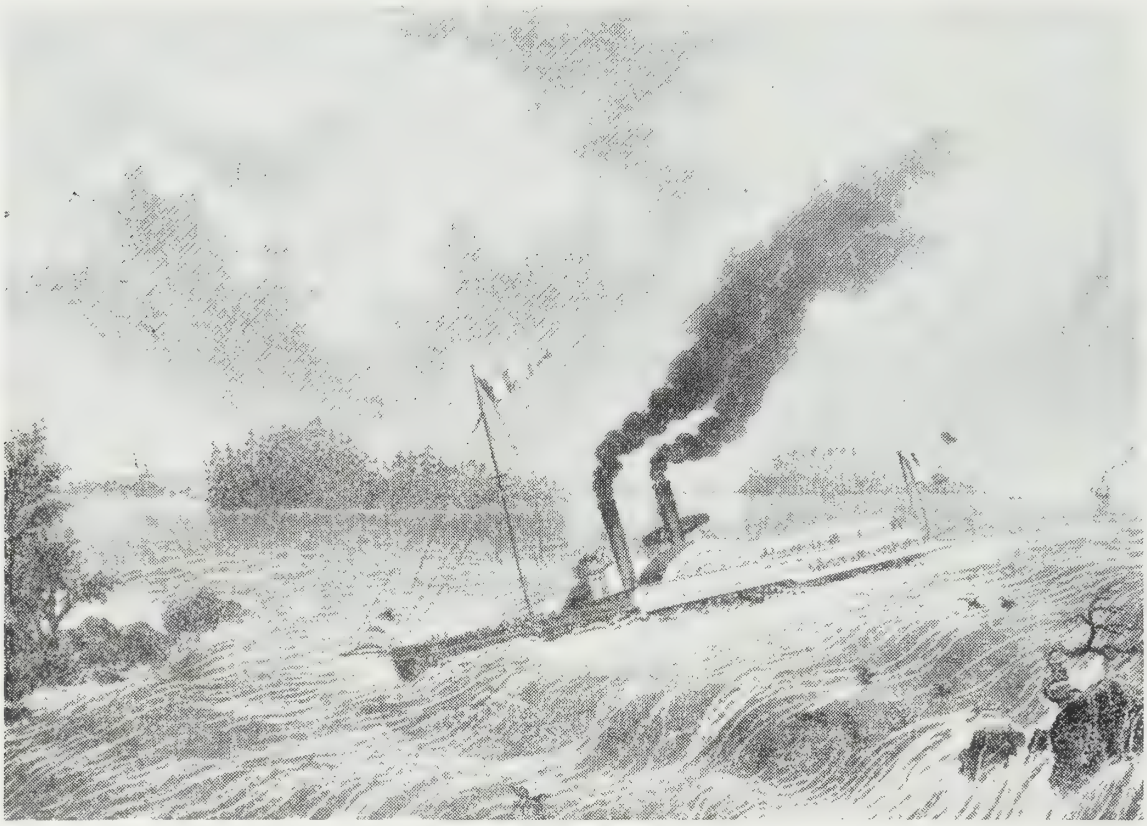
[†] Jesus is said to have given the sons of Zebedee (James and John) the name Boanerges, 'the sons of thunder'.—*E.C.G.*



Hunter's Panoramic Guide, 1857

LACHINE RAPIDS

The first to be overcome in the ascent of the mighty St. Lawrence.

timber in such a torrent. After some other rapids we came to Côteau du Lac, a French name, which I am told means a hill on a lake, but I could see no hill higher than a midden (and they are higher here than ever I saw them any where else), and as for a lake, it's no broader than the rest of the river.

I had now an opportunity of examining the soil, as I walked on the bank while the French bodies pulled and shoved the flat-bottomed boat (which they, poor deluded creatures, in their barbarous lingo called a batto) up the rapid. It's no ill land yon—deep rich clay, which I would think must be dour of the tilth, but bears wonderful crops, considering that it has been cropped with white crops for a hundred years, and no a grapeful of dung laid upon it, nor a green crop ever thought of. What would the folk of Dundonald, Saltcoats, or Irvine say, who live like the rabbits among the land, if they were to hear of folk calling themselves farmers, who, when their midden of horse-dung and cow-dung and straw became too large for their convenience, carted it off bodily and couped it into the river to get quit of it? But that's the way here.

At a place they call Lancaster I had another opportunity of inspecting the country; the land is not so good, being stone here and there, but if it was in the hands of skilful farmers it might be brought to good purpose; but the folk are Highlanders, so no good can be expected of it.

CORNWALL TO KINGSTON

About Cornwall the land is no that ill, but inland it gets worse. We stopped at Brockville to take in wood for the steamboat; it is a flourishing place, but the people are Yankeefied and remarkably hoggish in their

Public Archives of Canada Artist unknown

'KINGSTOWN BRIDGE, 1844'
At the right is a bateau on a sightseeing excursion.

Willis, *Canadian Scenery* W. H. Bartlett

THE LONG SAULT, 1840
At the left is the portage.

manners. I met one decent man, however, their member, who is from Kilmarnock, and a remarkably good judge of night caps.

KINGSTON

From that to Kingston, the greater part of the way the land is rocky and bad, covered with pine trees, which, I am told, are always found in a barren, sandy soil; and as for Kingston, if it were for us to presume to give our thoughts on the judgment of Providence, we would say that certainly the land round it was formed whereon to place the wicked for the punishment of their sins.

Tell Mary and the bairns that I arrived in Kingston safe from any attack of wild beasts. She was dreadfully frightened, poor thing, when a serjeant's wife of the 71st told her that her husband had written her home that the road between Cornwall and Kingston was infested by a certain lang soo, which swallowed up many people passing—and so, to be sure, it is, but it is not an overgrown brute of the swine tribe as we thocht at the time, but merely one of those plunging rapids that drowns folks going down and taigles them coming up. The sow's tusks, however, are likely to be drawn by a Mr Killaly,† who is cutting a canal through it by order of the Government.

BY STEAMBOAT TO TORONTO

I took the steamboat for Toronto, and we touched during the night at two places, Cobourg and Port Hope, but I was asleep and did not see them. Next day, however, a fat Highlandman, with a reddish head the colour of a fox, and who lives in the Rice Lake country, as the interior of the Newcastle district is called, told me that it was a very rich and fertile country and sent a vast of wheat to these markets, and that a canal was cutting that would render its communication with the lake easy.

I had heard much of the fertility of Yonge Street—that is the road that goes right back from Toronto; for in this country a road is a street though it should not have a house on it once in a mile; I walked over it and went back occasionally into the country, resolved to take my time to it, as it is not every body that is so clever as Mr. Sheriff‡ of Mungo's Wells, who could fly over a country twice as big as Europe in five months and describe it as minutely as a minister does his parish in Sir John Sinclair's Statistical; and really it is a fine country, and grand large barns and outhouses, and the crops to all appearance remarkably thriving.

YONGE STREET SETTLERS

The folk here have great advantages. Toronto is an excellent market for all kinds of produce, and in clearing their land they get as much for the firewood as will cover the expense; and above all they have a macadamized road, and though some of them grumble at being obliged to pay the toll, yet by their own confession they can carry at one load now as much as they could at two and a half formerly, to say nothing of the breaking of their waggons, the tearing of their harness, and the utter murder of their horses. The only objection to this part of the country is that the half of the people are rank rebels, and I would never settle myself, nor advise a friend to settle, among an unsanctified clanjamfray that neither fear God nor honour the Queen.

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†The Killalys have been connected with the St. Lawrence and Trent canals for two or three generations.—*E.C.G.*

‡Patrick Shirreff, author of *A Tour through North America* (1835).—*E.C.G.*

I shall leave this place to-morrow, and give you some account of it in my next; I go round the head of the lake to the Falls of Niagara. I might go across in a steamboat but wish to see the country. Yours, &c.

R.S.

LETTER III

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Toronto is a town of about 15,000 inhabitants, with good brick houses; and as for shops, or, as they call them here, *stores*, they may be compared with those of either Quebec or Montreal. It is situated on the side of Lake Ontario, the harbour being protected from storms by a long low sandy point that forms a safe haven of about three miles from east to west.

OLD TORONTO

The growth of this town has, like many others in this country, been most rapid. In 1816 there were only seventy-six houses (counting log-huts and shanties, that is, sheilings). In 1832 it was still a dirty village, but a great emigration took place in that and the following years, and it is now a good sized town, and the seat of a very considerable trade, as it supplies the country behind and above it with all the British goods they require, and that, to judge from the state of its wharfs, warehouses, and wholesale stores, must be no trifle.

ALONG THE LAKE SHORE ROAD

I started on my way upwards along the lower or lake shore road—the land here is good, being the mud and clay deposited by the lake, though sometimes it is encumbered by round stones, rounded doubtless by the action of the water. Farther on, here and there, is a kind of reddish marl, which seems very productive. The streams or creeks, as the burns and waters are uniformly called in this country, are here creeks in reality, for they are, where they join the lake, deep dull inlets, most of them navigable for miles. It is probable that the first explorers of the country went in boats and canoes to carry their provisions—these creeks would form their harbours, and having once named them from the wood that grew on their sides, as Alder Creek or Cedar Creek, or from their distance from an ascertained point, as Sixteen-mile Creek, they remained for ever after creeks to their very source.

I slept this night at Oakville, a neat, thriving village where they have a very good harbour, from which they ship a great deal of grain and barrel-staves from the back country.

THE BURLINGTON CANAL

Next morning I proceeded to the Burlington canal, that is an artificial cut through a ridge of land that crosses the head of Lake Ontario and divides it from a smaller lake on which stands the town of Hamilton. You'll mind that Captain Basil Hall† mentions this, and supposes that the ridge was formed by the shoving of the ice; but a decent man that I met there, with a broad blue bonnet, told me that he thought the Captain was wrong, that it was merely a sand-bar left above the water by the subsiding of the lake, and that it had been formed, as all other bars were, by two currents meeting and neutralizing each other, so at the point where they become still the deposits of both must fall—the streams falling into the inner lake cause a rush out, and the lake, agitated by an easterly wind, rushes in, and here they come to a standstill. While waiting for the steamboat I watched the canal, and found the water rushing in at the rate of three or four miles an hour, and I was told by a man who lives on the spot that when the wind changed it would rush out even faster than it came in; and as there is always a current one way or other, instead of forming a bar it washes away any that may have a tendency to form.

Courtesy Hazel Mathews — Sir Frederick Verner

CHISHOLM MILL, OAKVILLE, 1856

IMPRESSIONS OF HAMILTON

When the steamboat came up I got on to Hamilton, a clean little town, which is getting on wonderfully. It is situated at the foot of a hill which the folk call a mountain—in Scotland we would call it a brae; but it is easy to be a mountain in a country that's as flat as this table.

I was particularly struck with Dundurn castle, which stands on a height overhanging the lake—it is so uncommon in this country to see anything like a country gentleman's house that it reminds you of home. It belongs to Sir Allan M^{c}Nab, who commanded in this country during the rebellion; but, though born in this province himself, his forbears came from the Highlands and he is no unlike a Highlandman himself, being a weel faur'd man with broad shoulders and heather legs.

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†Author of *Travels in America in 1827 and 1828* (3 Volumes, 1829).—*E.C.G.*

TOLL-GATES

I set off the next morning on the road towards Dundas, and as good a macadamized road as any in Ayrshire; it is well made and thoroughly drained, and as it passes over several glens and valleys, the slopes down and up are gentle and gradual. I was told that the country owes this and many other improvements to the exertions of Sir Allan. There is here, too, some grumbling about paying the toll, but it is always the way; folk think more of the twopence they have to pay than the good road they have to travel. My grandfather told me that when toll-bars were first established in Scotland the Highland drover bodies were like to go distracted at the "tam turnumspike" as they called them, and in Ireland the chief qualification of a toll-man was bodily strength and being a good cudgel player; for as he expected a thump on the head instead of the money that was his due, he came out guarding St George with "Will your honour be pleased to pay the pike?"

Courtesy Henry Holland

SARNIA TOLLGATE

The last in Ontario, it was closed in 1926.

This was the first opportunity I had of seeing what is called plain land, that is, sandy land, whereon oak or pine grows. There is a prejudice against it, as it is thought to be light and easily exhausted; but this seems to have worn tolerably well, though it must be confessed it has got a reasonable share of manure of late.

CANADIAN FARMING

Formerly the farmers here, like their brethren of Lower Canada, thought manure a nuisance, but as they had not, like them, the convenience of a river wherein to throw it, they piled it before their barns, and when the heap became too large they dragged the barn back and commenced anew—this has been done here within these ten or twelve years; but the land being soon worn out, they began to bethink them of the despised dung heap, and an accumulation of fifteen or twenty years being laid on, in the course of two or three the land was restored and produced excellent crops.

One thing that strikes Scotchmen as strange is that the land is either not in ridges at all, or they are so broad that, for the purpose of drainage, they must be utterly useless; but they all agree that narrow ridges like ours are not necessary, and as old country people give into it I suppose it must be so. Otherwise the cultivation is good; ploughing straight and well laid, while the frost in winter and heat in spring crumbles the clods, so that a reasonable harrowing reduces them to powder, and makes wheat fields resemble a well raked garden bed. The gravel of these plains is always lime, and that, exposed to the sun, wind, and frost, makes a manure of itself.

On the lower side of the road, on the banks of the streams, and in the valleys there is some remarkably fine carse land, rather wet but could easily be drained, and even as it is produces capital crops of hay.

DUNDAS AND ANCASTER

After passing through Dundas, a neat village buried in a valley, I ascended the mountain, where I got a view of remarkable beauty, being the valley between this and the opposite hill, on which stands the village of Ancaster. I have seldom, if ever, seen anything of its kind to equal it. I there went down into a glen to see a waterfall, or rather a number of them—to my surprise, in this hollow I stumbled on a village. I asked the name of it and was told it had no name; it was just the Hon. William Crooks' mills; and to be sure here were saw-mills, and grist-mills, and paper-mills, and carding-mills, and wauk (fulling) mills, and distilleries, and tanneries, and the Lord knows what beside. I asked who Mr Crooks was, and was told he was a Scotsman from Kilmarnock—Weel dune Ayrshire yet! thocht I; ye'll find us in every quarter of the globe, but never as hewers o' wood or drawers o' water.

UTILITY VERSUS BEAUTY

This glen is really beautiful, but the natives of the country neither ken nor care about these things; they have no notion of beauty but how money can be made of it. I remarked to a rather decent looking man what a splendid waterfall was before us; and what do you think was the reply of the uncircumcised Philistine? "Why, yes, mister, I guess it is a very nice water privilege; I wonder no one don't put a mill on it; it shouldn't ought to stand idle". They look at a waterfall in a wooded glen with precisely the same feelings they would at the muddy waters of a canal tumbling over a gate into a lock-pit.

That night I returned late to Mr Press's inn in Hamilton, who is a worthy man and a civil landlord, where, after a hearty supper, I spent a most pleasant evening with a party of the most celebrated characters of the place, at the head of which was Mr John Law, who comes from Galloway and whose company cured me of a prejudice I had entertained from my youth upwards, namely, that nothing civilized ever came out of that benighted and moorland district.

The next morning I started off for the southward. The land under the mountain is rich clay, having, doubtless, received all the soil that the slope of the hill had to give it; but the road is abominable; for they say

Courtesy Olive Newcombe, Dundas Historical Museum Miss Black

WEBSTER'S FALLS, 1860

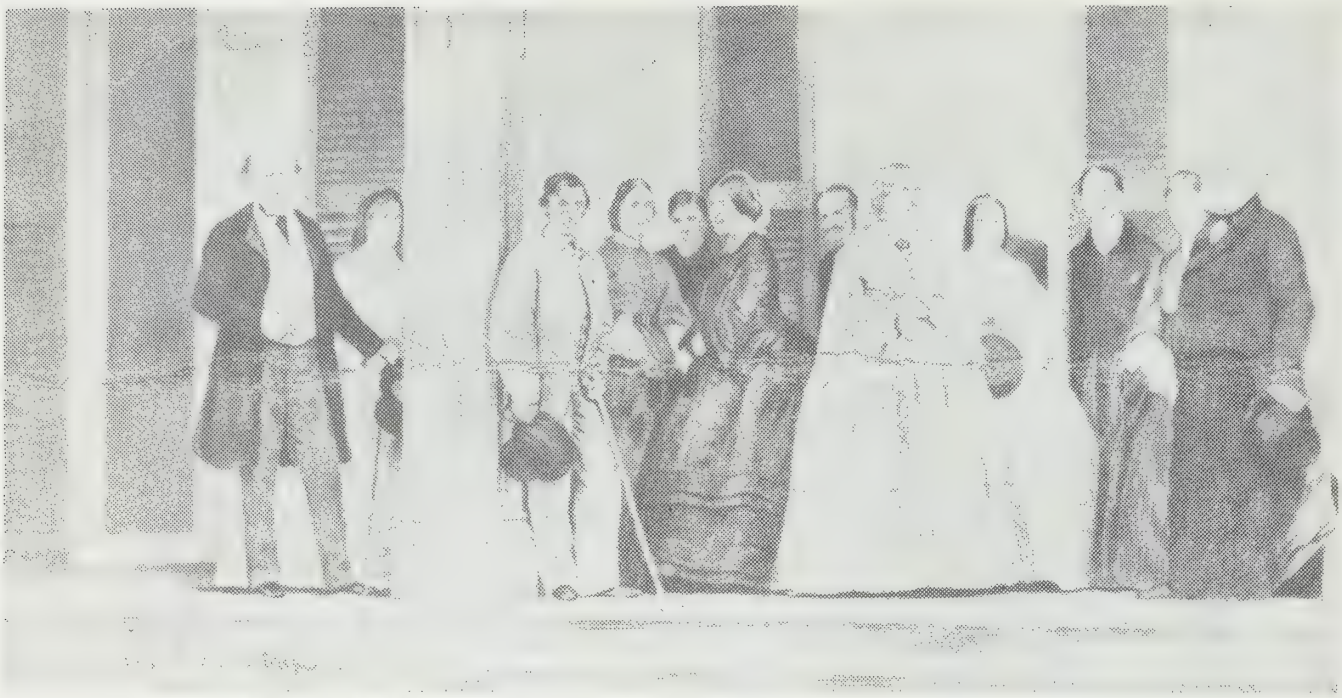
'Why, yes, mister; I wonder no one don't put a mill on it.
It shouldn't ought to stand idle.'

in this country, where they are not in the habit of putting any metal on roads, that you never can have good roads and good land in the same place.

I ascended the mountain to see a fall at what is called the Albion Mills. It is, in fact, broken into two falls, and there being a flood in the river to-day I saw it to great advantage. This, too, is a scene that not one in a thousand of the inhabitants of this country has ever seen or heard tell of.

SUICIDE FOR LOVE

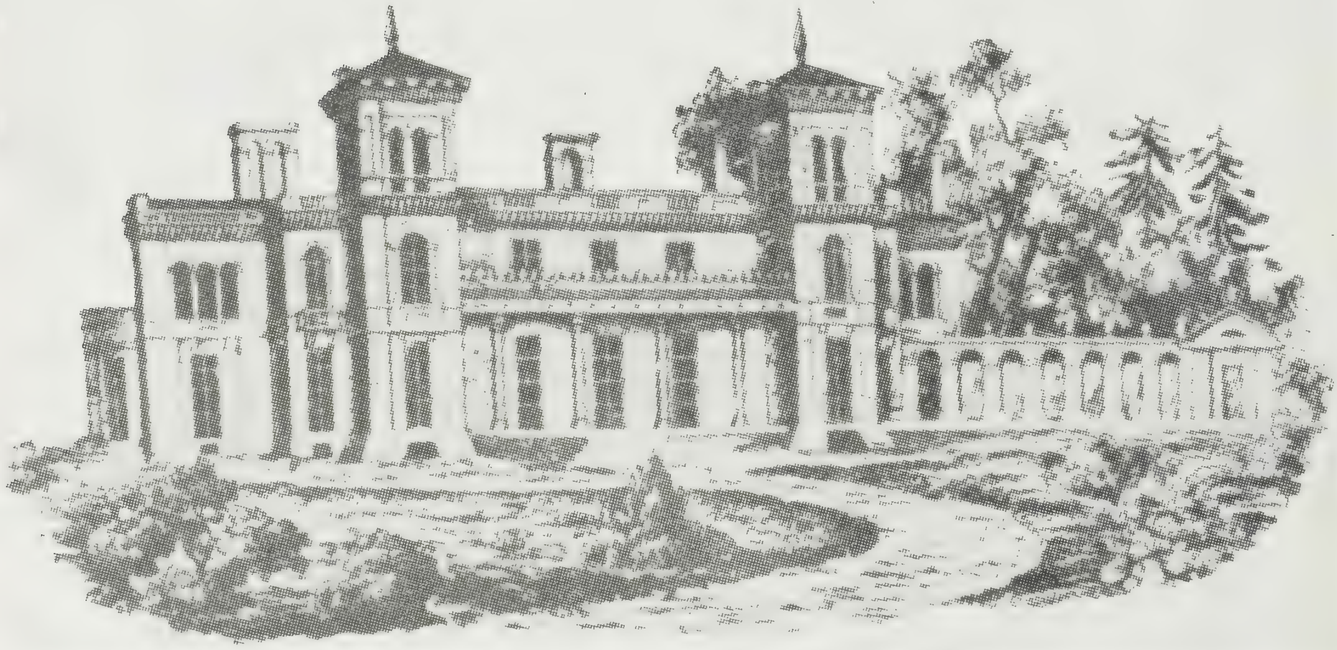
Here a cliff was pointed out to me that had been the scene of a melancholy tale some years ago. A young lady of beauty and accomplishments had emigrated with her parents from Ireland. A young man in the neighbourhood paid his addresses to her and won her affections. Soon after, however, his attentions grew cold, and at last ceased altogether, and he began to draw up with another. This preyed upon her mind, but none of her friends anticipated anything serious. She came to pass a few days with the lady of the gentleman who then owned the property, and one forenoon led his daughter, a girl of eight or ten years of age, out to walk. She took her way towards the cliff, which is upwards of a hundred feet down into the stream. She looked steadily into the chasm, while the girl, from fear, stood aloof. She then returned to the child, hastily adjusted her disordered hair, knelt down and kissed her, and then, suddenly turning round, she took a race and leaped over the



Courtesy Women's Canadian Historical Society of Toronto

PRINCE OF WALES AT DUNDURN CASTLE, HAMILTON, 1860

Among others in this early photograph are Sir Edmund and Lady Head, Sir Allan MacNab, and the Misses MacNab.



Map of Hamilton, 1851

DUNDURN CASTLE, HAMILTON

One of very few early Ontario residences in the grand style, Sir Allan MacNab's mansion was built around the first brick building in Wentworth County, erected about 1800 as his home by Richard Beasley, original owner of the property. On the 31-acre estate, near the Lake shore, the Prime Minister had a disguised cockpit, though cock-fighting was illegal.

precipice. Two labourers on the opposite side of the glen beheld the whole scene. They said that at first she fell rapidly, feet foremost—then her descent was more gradual—and at one time, when considerably more than half way down, she seemed to pause in the air, her clothes acting as a parachute; then her descent again began, and seemed to increase in rapidity as she neared the ground, when she alighted on her feet and fell over in a heap. They hurried down the glen as fast as the nature of the ground would permit; they found she had lit on a plank, into which the brass heels of her walking boots were deeply dented. They raised her; she had not a bone broken, nor was she insensible. She spoke calmly and without difficulty, though she breathed heavily. She was carried to the house, where medical aid was procured; but she expired that night. The cliff from which she sprang, in memory of the event, is still called "The Lover's Leap".

I returned to Hamilton by the *high* road that is on the top of the mountain. The land is not so rich as below, still it is good. I shall leave this to-morrow for Niagara.

Love to Mary and the bairns. Yours affectionately,

R.S.

Hamilton, June.

LETTER IV

My Dear Brother,

I started for Niagara, the road still keeping near the Lake shore, and the land much as before. This is an old settlement, and most of the houses are surrounded with orchards and have snug neat gardens, which gives a great look of comfort, to say nothing of the convenience. Wherever a stream of any size comes down there is sure to be a mill on it. The hill here sometimes comes near the lake, and sometimes falls back; at one time it is very steep, and at another a slope, but always wooded and beautiful. At some miles from Niagara it goes off from the shore of the lake altogether, when there is a level plain of rather hard clay, and from what I could see not very productive.

I was determined to take it easy, so that I might have time to make my observations. I slept at a place they call the Forty-mile Creek,† and it was well on in the second day before I arrived at the town of Niagara.

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

This town was entirely burned down during the war, so that the present one was built since the peace. It's a very nice town in its way, but has not the stir and bustle of others in the country. Here is a fort and a garrison of soldiers, and opposite to it the Americans have another. It seemed a strange thing to me, who never saw a foreign flag before but on a ship, to see the colours of two nations hoisted over their forts, divided only by a river, not, I should think, quite a mile broad.

I proceeded through Queenston, through a sandy soil but well cultivated, with many large brick farm houses and fine orchards; for the people along the Niagara river make a vast of cider. It struck me as strange that the people should let their orchards be exposed with only a common fence, which, though it keeps out beasts, yet a body can easily get over it, even if they kept a watch. When I mentioned this to a farmer he burst out laughing, and said these were old country notions —that fruit was too common here to be much coveted, and if a passing traveller did take a pocket full of apples or peaches they would never be missed among so many, and they were of too little consequence to quarrel about.

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†Grimsby, or The Forty. The creeks were measured from Niagara.—*E.C.G.*

QUEENSTON HEIGHTS AND THE FALLS

On Queenston Heights is the ruins of a monument raised to the memory of General Brock, where he fell after having defeated the Americans, who were three times his number. A Yankee *loafer* (that's the name they give to a ne'er-do-weel in this country) blew it up with gunpowder some years back.† The country between this and the Falls is still sandy, but the crops looked well.

I shall not attempt to describe the Falls; it has often been tried by far abler hands than mine, and so far as I have seen has never yet been done. To have any notion of them you must see them yourself. I staid there three days, and if I had staid three months I am sure I never should have been wearied of looking at them. You see something new and something wonderful every time you look at them, and they vary at every new point you see them from.

BY SCHOONER TO ST. CATHARINES

From the Falls I went on to Chippaway Creek, which communicates with the Welland Canal, and taking advantage of a schooner going up I sailed through a fine settled old country with a rich soil, but rather scant of water. When I came to the canal I staid on board the schooner; the captain thereof, being a kind civil man, he said it was a pity I should not see their grand canal, which he considered the eighth wonder of the world, and far better worth waring time on than the Falls of Niagara, which were well enough to look at *but were of no use*. The land here is good too, and there are grand farms on it, and it is a great convenience to the farmer, that instead of wading to market through deep roads, he can take his sack on his back in his barn, and fling it on board a vessel as easily as he could lay it on a cart.

The captain told me that the canal was cut in consequence of the exertions of one Mr Hamilton Merritt, a flushing, phraising, plausible cheil that can gar folk believe that he can make spade-shafts bear plums. The locks are of wood, which seems strange to me, seeing that there is as much stone taken out of the lock-pits as would have built them: they say they are now going to make them of stone; it would have been as well had they done so at first.

ON THE GRAND RIVER

Having seen the canal to the locks above St Catherines I returned to where I started, and there took the track-boat to Dunnville, where there is a dam on the Grand River that supplies the feeder of the canal—

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†Brock's Monument was blown up in 1840 during the border troubles which were an aftermath of the Rebellion of 1837.—*E.C.G.*

thence by boat towards Brantford, through some of the finest holm land I ever saw, belonging to the Six Nation Indians, and well cultivated considering that the folk are only kind of half tamed savages; many of them have farms of seventy acres under tillage, with good stocks of horses and kye, and no doubt in a generation or two they will be just like other folk, for it takes many generations to tame wild creatures, and you might as well expect that by setting the eggs of a wild duck under a hen you would hatch a clecking of tame ducks as that you could make a wild man tame in one or even two generations.

THE MOHAWK INDIANS

They are Christians, however, the most feck of them; that is to say, they are Episcopalians; and they shewed me the Bible and the sacrament cups that they got from Queen Anne more than a hundred years ago, and which they carried with them through all their troubles and tribulations during the American war, where they fought bravely on the King's side, for which they got their lands here.

Courtesy of the Artist — Alice B. Pilant

MOHAWK CHAPEL, BRANTFORD

After looking about me for a day or two in this neighbourhood, I intend, God willing, to proceed by London to the west. This is no that bad country—indeed I think the land improves the farther I go.

Tell Mary that though I do not write to her, that I intend my letter just as muckle for her as for you, but it is well known that the post office folk are no just so precise about women folk's letters as about man's, in respect that they are not supposed to contain matters of such weighty concernment. With kindest regards to all inquiring friends, I remain, my dear brother, your affectionate, till death,

Robert Stevenson.

Brantford.

LETTER V

My Dear Brother,

From Brantford I proceeded up the Grand River, and a beautiful river it is. It runs mostly through plain lands, and the folk tell me it is remarkably fertile and easily cleared, and as easily worked. The people are mostly Scotch, being chiefly from Dumfriesshire, and the township is called Dumfries in consequence. I did not go up to Galt (the capital) because I mean to go there by another road.

OBTAINING A WIFE

I was told a story here I think worth relating. Two young men came out from Scotland together and took adjoining farms; and after they had built houses and got things something purpose like, one of them, who had courted a lass in Scotland, went home to marry her and bring her out. Before starting, his friend came to him and told him that he wanted a wife too but he did not like the women of this country, for though the well was close to the door they would take a tin trumpet and blow on their husband to come in from the plough to fetch water. So he requested him, when he was in Scotland, to pick him out a wife and bring her out. Accordingly he got a cousin of his own wife's to come out with him, and his friend met them in Hamilton and got married off hand, and I am told there is not a happier couple in the district, which just shews that a great deal of time is lost in making love, and that folk had just as well begin where they mean to end.

ZORRA AND LONDON

I spent two days among these folk, and very kind and civil they were to me. They have, however, rather an overly full way of living, eating no parritch and very little kail, but flesh meat three times a day; they look strong and healthy though, nevertheless.

I then proceeded to London. The township of Zorra is fine land, settled with Highlanders from the shores of the Frozen Ocean, being from Sutherland and Caithness—it has often struck me, from what I've read of it, that the folk have a dash of the Esquimaux Indian in them, for they are a hard favoured generation, and rather savage in their way.

All this tract of country is good, but I was told that to the south was what they call the Long Point Country, which is sandy plains and barren. Sometimes the sand drifts like snow and covers up a whole cleared farm, just as we are told it drifts in the Arabian desert. They use green manure here, they sow buck wheat (a grain I never saw before, but it is good for swine and hens, and makes special good pancakes), and when it is in flower or coming into seed they plough it down and put in their fall wheat on the top of it, and this produces fair crops as to quantity and excellent as to quality. I think this might be done to advantage in many of the sandy soils on the Ayrshire coast. Besides this they have a kind of stone called gypsum (which, when burned in a kiln, makes the Paris plaster that they make the poll parrots and the Buonapartes and the other stucco images out of that the Italian boys sell), and this laid on at so small a proportion as a bushel to the acre, that is, one-fourth of a boll, fertilizes the ground in a wonderful manner—it is also wonderful the extraordinary bounty of Providence, that whenever there is an extensive tract of sandy land it is almost certain that there is a quarry of gypsum at no great distance.

The land rather improves as we approach London, and is in many cases a fine clayey loam, exceedingly rich, and producing heavy crops of everything—the potatoes, however, are wet, which I attribute more to their not changing the seed than to the soil, for in the clay lands of the Lothians I have seen as good potatoes grown as in the light soils of our own country.

James Hamilton

DUNDAS STREET, LONDON, 1840

Looking west from Wellington Street to Rideau Street.

IMPRESSIONS OF LONDON

London is beautifully situated on the junction of two branches of the River Thames, which, from the high banks above them, looks as if all the three rivers were about one size. It is a thriving place, as the surrounding country is all good and they send in a great deal of wheat and other produce, which in the summer is shipped on Lake Erie and in the winter time is taken in sleighs down to Hamilton. This place may be considered as the capital of that part of the province that borders on Lake Erie. It is from the wholesale dealers of this that the smaller stores in the country parts receive their supplies, and to pay for these they send in the produce they obtain from their customers; besides, it is a country town and a garrison, so it has a lively appearance with it.

I staid three days in London and visited its neighbourhood. I find it all good land. There are many excellent farms, very extensive and very well stocked and cultivated. The people who came in here at first were mostly poor and received their land from government gratis, but they have got on wonderfully, though they tell me they had terrible hardships to contend with at first; but on the whole it strikes me that a man had better, if he can manage it, pay a good price for his land where there are roads and mills, a market, and a neighbourhood, than to get land in the wild bush for nothing.

I remain, my dear John, with love to Mary and the bairns, your affectionate brother,

R. S.

London.

LETTER VI

My Dear John,

I started from London on my way to Chatham. I went through generally a rich clay land; but when I crossed the Thames it was rather sandy, but still not barren land, having a good deal of clay mixed with it, as is easily to be perceived, if you have to pass through it, as I had, after a shower, from the mud that sticks to your shoes.

Public Archives of Canada Lieutenant Philip Bainbrigge

6th STREET, CHATHAM, 1838

'The beautiful little town of Chatham'.—Anna Jameson.

ALONG THE THAMES TO CHATHAM

The land all along this road is a deep rich clay, and the farms are mostly well cultivated and extensive; a great deal of good has accrued to the country from the formation of Agricultural Associations and the consequent cattle shows—stock has improved amazingly—Teeswater cows, Lei'ster and South-down sheep, and Berkshire swine, that would not shame any agricultural show in the kingdom.

The River Thames is a fine stream from its source to Chatham. It runs rapidly over its rocky or gravelly bed and would furnish mill power for the whole province, but unluckily it runs the wrong way, arising in the east at no great distance from Ontario and running parallel to Lake Erie, it falls into Lake St Clair, so that no use can be made of it for bringing produce to market; for the farther down you go the farther you are from your place of sale. The only use, therefore, that is made of it in this way is to carry rafts of lumber down to Detroit and the neighbourhood, where pine is scarce.

From Chatham downward it is a lazy, canal-looking river, with no perceptible current, but deep and navigable for any vessel that can sail these lakes.

THE ST. CLAIR FLATS

The land on its banks is about the richest I ever saw in any country. Six or seven feet deep of earth that would do for a garden, and extensive grass plains stretching for miles into the country, without a tree save here and there a small clump like an island in the plain—the grass, particularly that called blue joint, furnishes excellent pasture and hay. Indeed, your beasts, after they are weaned, are branded and turned out to pasture, and never reclaimed till wanted for use. Running water, however, is scant, and the people, from finding it so easy to scramble along after a fashion, are a lazy generation and only half do their work. Their ground is generally foul, and their wheat, of course, mixed with the seeds of the weeds which are allowed to grow in such profusion among it. Add to all this, the stagnant water that is allowed to stand in these plains in the spring and fall (for they never dream of draining, though it would be easy) breeds fever and ague, so that on the whole I do not consider it a desirable location.

When you get down to the lake at the mouth of the river, which you do through a road that when the lake is high takes the horses up to their bellies in water, you have the same low grass plain land until you come within a few miles of the village of Windsor, when it improves and is rather higher above the bed of the river.

WINDSOR AND SMUGGLING

The village of Windsor is a new place, formed, in consequence of the American tariff, to enable the inhabitants to smuggle British goods across the river. The village, therefore, consists of two classes of men, store-keepers and tailors, the former to violate the laws of the United States, the latter to evade them; for a man coming over from Detroit buys cloth for a suit of clothes, gets them made, and then marches back to Detroit with the new clothes on his back and the old ones in a bundle, under the very nose of the Collector of Customs.

There is a settlement of industrious Irish in the rear of Sandwich, who, though their land was originally wet, have made it highly productive by draining. It is the most prosperous settlement I have yet seen in the Western District.

AMHERSTBURG AND LAKE ERIE

I proceeded alongside of the river to Amherstburg. The land is low and liable to inundation, but rich alluvial soil. Of Amherstburg may be said what the Irishman said of Lochmaben, it is a "finished town", for there is not a house built in it once a-year. Its principal trade is in tobacco, of which about 1000 hogsheads are raised in the neighbourhood yearly. I shall proceed to-morrow down the lake shore, and shall probably write when I get to St Thomas on my way back to London. So, with kindest remembrance to all friends,

I remain, &c. &c

R. S.

LETTER VII

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I proceeded from Amherstburg in an easterly direction, along the shore of the lake. For some way the land is rich, and descends towards the lake with a very gentle slope; farther on there are high steep banks of hard clay, perhaps 100 feet higher than the lake; and here it is extraordinary that the streams flow from the lake, as the top of these banks which overhang it are higher than the land in the interior—this has produced swamp and creates a necessity for drainage, which is very easily accomplished by each man cutting a narrow ditch of sufficient depth to cause a run on each side of his farm—these, when the snow melts, soon scour themselves to a proper width and depth, and in the course of a very few years, where they join the lake, cause a gully across the road that is difficult to bridge. To remedy this they every two or three years remove the road a little back; but the only way they can ever effectually remove this obstacle is by at once putting the road back to the far end of the lot—then they will have only to bridge the ditch, not the ravine.

This land is remarkably rich, but not farmed in the very best manner. I suspect the most of the inhabitants never were bred farmers.

COLONEL TALBOT'S DOMAIN

Through the Talbot settlement, so called from having been settled by Colonel Talbot, and great credit is due him from having settled it so effectually; the land is generally good, but after passing Dunwich the soil is not so strong; the plains commence, and chestnut and other woods that indicate a light soil appear. I took a day and a half's journey into the Long Point Country, but I do not like it. The roads here, however, are good, because the land is bad; but they have this difficulty about them, that, like Hampshire in England, you have only to drive a waggon forward to make a road, and by and by the wheels cut through the turf into the sand. Accordingly every farmer leaves the main road at any angle that best suits his own convenience, so that every farm road looks as big as the main road, and I wandered a dozen times in the course of a few miles.

THE PRETTY VILLAGE OF ST. THOMAS

I took my way, therefore, towards St Thomas, a very pretty village on a bank overhanging a river, and having staid there to see the country about I proceeded towards London.

The land round St Thomas is all good, some of it richer and some of it lighter; but the folk there tell me that the difference in the production of the two kinds of land is made up by the lighter being easier tilled. It may be so, but I would prefer the rich land, though it may be no so free to the plough.

LONDON FAIR

On arriving in London I found it was the quarter-sessions and a fair day. I went through among the beasts and saw some very good Durham cattle and Lei'ster and South-down sheep. I have my doubts whether Lei'sters and Durhams will do in this country after two or three generations. It's the pasture that makes the breed, and I doubt if their new pastures are sufficient to support these large beasts. Sir James Graham tried them in Cumberland, and had to go back to the Cheviots and Ayrshires. Lady Mary Lindsay Crawford brought a very large breed of cattle from Rome, where they are fed in the salt marshes by the sea side, but they fell off every generation and they are now not much larger than the common cattle of the country.

As I was sauntering through the fair, who should I foregather with but my old friend Tam Kennedy! Tam came to this country ten years ago, and having no more than paid his passage, he went to service to the clerk of the district, who is a wonderful agriculturalist, and has a noble breed of cattle. He has made a very useful discovery of how to know whether land is fit for barley in the spring. By rather a queer process he ascertains its temperature, and if it feels warm he knows it is in a fit state for sowing. I'm astonished he never published his discovery. Well, Tam was some years with him, and he is now in a very thriving way, with a good farm and a good stock of cattle.

I went out with Tam that night, for it is scrimp ten miles from London, and a snug bien place he has. When he began farming he bee't to get married, so he got a farmer's daughter from Fenwick and a handy stirring lass she is, and a grand one for butter and cheese.

Their oldest bairn (a lassie) is no six years of age yet, and it's wonderful how useful she is to her mother. It's astonishing how early in this country they make children useful. Boys are set to look after oxen at an age that in Scotland we would be afraid to trust them out of our sight without somebody to look after them.

THE CHOICE OF LAND

I had a long crack with Tam about where to settle, and he advised me to buy a farm at Sheriff's sale, and he recommended me to one only the fifth part of a mile from his own. He said I would not get better land in the district, and it had considerable improvements on it. Accordingly, next morning when he went back to the court to be a something they call a grand juror, I went to look at the land.

There is one hundred acres of it, and thirty of them cleared. It has a good barn upon it, and a fine young orchard close to the house. The house has been good but has been sorely abused, the windows being broken and the water coming through the roof in two or three places, so that it would require a good deal of repair. The land is excellent but has been neglected, briars and raspberries being the principal crop. The fences are in bad order, and all the cattle in the country have been grazing in it for the last two years or else it would have been a thicket of brambles. But as it never has been much wrought, and the grazing has given it a rest, it is in good order for the plough.

FARMING VERSUS LUMBERING

The poor gomeril of a bodie that owned it was doing well as a farmer, and wanted to do better. So he neglected his farm and took to lumber and potashes. This brought him in to giving bills and backing bills, and like all folk that take in hand a business they do not understand he fell through with it, and seeing nothing before him but the tolbooth he yoked his waggon one night, and put all his matters in it that would carry easily, and made a moonlight flitting of it to the United States. Tam tells me that that is invariably the end of a farmer who quits his own business and takes to one he knows nothing about.

When I got back to dinner I found Tam there before me, there being no more business for the grand jury that day. I told him I liked the farm, and asked him what he thought would be the value of it. He said, were he valuing it between man and man he could not call it less than L.250. This was a sore damper, for I told him that besides what I had to bear my charges, I had only a letter of credit for L.150. He said he thought that might do, so I went to London with him, for that was the day of the sale.

BUYING A FARM

When it was put up, there was only one man bid against me, and that was a wee gleg-looking deevil they called Diggory, a storekeeper; he bid it up to L.105; I bid L.110; he then turned round on his heel and said that that was thirty shillings more than it owed him; so I was declared the purchaser and I paid for it by a draft on the bank of Scotland of L.91 3s. 4½d., the difference of exchange and currency making the odds.

I have been staying with Tam for ten days. I bought a yoke of oxen for sixty dollars, and a prime yoke they are; but everything is cheap now, and luckily so for us new settlers, for you have good harvests at home for the three past years; but I hope that the Lord in his mercy will send a blight or a dearth among you by the time I have anything to sell, which will be next year!*

I have hired a man to plough and summer fallow fifteen acres, which I mean to put in fall wheat, and then to plough the rest for a spring crop of wheat. I have to leave this to go to the district of Huron, because it was recommended as being good land, and I shall start to-morrow, as I behoove to see all the best parts of Canada for the good of the folk at whose expense I came out. When I come back I shall take charge of the farm myself. I am to live with Tam during the winter and pay two dollars and a half a week for the board of myself and my oxen, and that's no dear considering the vittles they give.

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*This honest aspiration of Robert Stevenson's reminds us of a story we have somewhere heard of a minister in the Hebrides, where the inhabitants depended, in a great measure, upon the winds and waves for their precarious subsistence, who, after a long season of calm weather, added the following to his usual prayer: We do not pray that the vessels on the great deep should be wrecked; but if they providentially should be, send them in *mercy* upon these rocks!—*Quebec Mercury*.

I hope to get the whole farm ploughed before the frost sets in, and Tam tells me that exposing the roots of the weeds and briars to the frost is the best way to kill them and clear the land. I shall then chop during the winter, and I hear that I may have enough to plant potatoes, oats, and barley forby some turnips, before the fore-part of the summer is over.

Tell Mary I'll be sure to have the house sorted for her and the bairns. She should come out in one of the earliest ships. Go to Mr Corbett's at Quebec, get to the head of Ontario, then through the Welland Canal, and I'll meet her, and blythe will I be to see her and the bairns on the banks of Lake Erie, and take them to their own home with the waggon and ox team.

I remain, my dear brother, yours affectionately,

R. S.

Dunure House, July.

LETTER VIII

I started from London, my dear brother, and proceeded into the district of Huron; I found the land excellent. It is a curious thing, and I never heard of it any where else, that the cattle here, turned into the woods, in the course of six weeks after the snow is gone are fit for the butcher. I stopped all night at a tavern kept by a Mr Balkwill, a Devonshire man, and there is a Devonshire settlement hereabouts, and very decent folk; they are hard working, and have a great talent at building clay houses and chimneys.

Farther on I met with Highlandmen from Nova Scotia, and really, considering all things, they are getting on extraordinary. I then came on to the end of the London road, and went to the house of one Mr Cook, where I spent a very pleasant evening with many of the neighbours.

GODERICH AND DR. DUNLOP

The land through which I passed was all good till I came near to the town of Goderich, where it gets gravelly. Goderich is on a high bank overlooking the River Maitland and Lake Huron, and a very bonny place it is. I here met with Dr Dunlop, and he asked me to come over and dine with him; he has a bonny house on the top of a bank overlooking one of the finest holms I ever saw, with the River Maitland winding through it. He is a man of most serious and devout manners, but not more so than becomes his station as a ruling elder of the Kirk. Indeed I am told he is a saint upon earth. We handled together divers spiritual matters; and, I am happy to say, he is to the full as orthodox as his brother the advocate, who makes such a rippet in the General Assembly, and who is a well meaning young man, but not overburdened with brains I'm doubting.

THE CANADA COMPANY

The doctor shewed me a statement which was published by the Canada Company about two years ago that astonished me much, as shewing the rapid advancement of the Company's settlements here, and which were only commenced in the latter part of the year 1829, before which period this extensive tract of land had not even been explored, and yet in the spring of 1840 their population exceeded six thousand, and the value of the improvements made upon their lands and of the live stock which they had acquired was L.242,287; and of this large amount it is worthy of deep attention that—

L.90,486 was acquired by five hundred and fourteen families who had come into the settlement altogether destitute.

L.10,242, by sixty-one families whose means were under L.10.

L.40,526, by two hundred and fifty-four families whose means were under £50, and

L.100,850 17s. 9d. was accumulated by parties whose means, though small, were over that amount, but still they were so very limited that they would not have been equal to securing for themselves at home one-fiftieth part of the independence that they now enjoy.

DR. WILLIAM DUNLOP

What ample encouragement is here held out to the poor labourer and small farmer, who is struggling at home for a bare subsistence, to emigrate to a country where so much may be accomplished by honest industry, unaided even by any moneyed capital whatever!

TERMS OF SETTLEMENT IN THE 'HURON TRACT'

The plans adopted by this company at the commencement of their operations were eminently calculated to produce this most satisfactory result; and in a country such as Canada then was they afford an example of the manner in which the wilderness can be opened to settlement, and, in all probability, of the only principle on which it can be done within a reasonable period.

Abundant employment was offered in making roads, and all were allowed to take up lands upon the condition of actual settlement, and at the low price of a dollar and a half an acre, or at very low rates. No portion of the purchase money was required in cash, and as a result we find that in the short space of ten years, five hundred and fourteen families have thus, from their own labours alone, made clearings and improvements on their land and acquired stock worth upwards of L.90,000; or if we were to add to this amount the large sums paid on account of the purchase of the lands where numbers are now freeholders, as well as the increased value given to their land over and above the cost price by these improvements, and by the settlement of the lands around, the amount would be immensely increased, for as mere land it had quadrupled in value in many situations, and in all it has more than doubled. . . .

A FAVOURABLE LOCATION

These are advantages which cannot fail to have a very favourable effect in inducing emigrants to select the Huron tract as their place of location, and in consequence I am informed that of last year's emigration about 2000 have come to the Huron tract, and about 700 have moved in from less favoured portions of the province, tempted by the superior quality of the soil and the liberal offers of the Company for the encouragement of settlers.

The population of the Huron tract, it appears, was,

In 1840	5,921
In April, 1842	7,293

And at the present hour it is supposed to be at the least 9,500.

And I am informed that several thousands may be expected out next year to join their friends already settled, in consequence of the very satisfactory accounts which have been transmitted home, and that in one township alone there are already letters arrived from forty families advising their friends of their intention of coming out next spring.

SUCCESSFUL EMIGRANTS

The postmasters in the different portions of the tract have remarked that an immense increase has taken place in the number of English letters transmitted and received by settlers, every one of which tends to render this highly favoured country and community better known, its advantages more highly appreciated, and upon the safest grounds and the most undeniable evidence, that of the success of those who have already emigrated. One postmaster alone has assured me that the number of English letters received and despatched from his office last year exceeded in number that for the two previous years put together. I was shewn a letter from a clergyman in the eastern part of the province, who intends moving into this district next summer and who expects that not only his whole congregation but some hundred families besides will follow him and establish themselves together in one township; and here is a great advantage also which these settlements possess, that any number of families can thus set themselves down together and have all their old friends and neighbours around them.

TEMPERANCE HIGHLANDERS

But a very remarkable circumstance connected with this gentleman's removal here is the character of the people who accompany him, and who are all Highlanders, that he has in the course of nine years' intercourse with them only seen two glasses of whiskey drank, and as a matter of course never saw a fou amongst them, and that he has often seen men who have come from a distance with their oxen to help at bees (which the Doctor says ought more properly to be called hives) leave the hive in profound disgust, merely because the master, or head bee of the hive, ventured to hint that a glass of whiskey might be refreshing to them after their long walk—an unusual feeling of temperance for a Highlander and a lumberman, and which it is devoutly to be hoped, in this land of whiskey, they may long continue to cherish.

THE ROAD TO WATERLOO

I returned twelve miles on the road by which I came, and then passed through a fine country towards Waterloo. It is entirely inhabited by old country people, whose clearings and farms are a sufficient contradiction to the very generally received notion in this country that it requires a lifetime to chop down trees. The farms are as good as any of their age in Canada, and the people as well off, though none of them have been on their land more than ten or twelve years, and many of them not half so long.

They have one great advantage over the rest of the Province—the Canada Company have made them good roads and built good mills, and that is sure to make a good settlement.

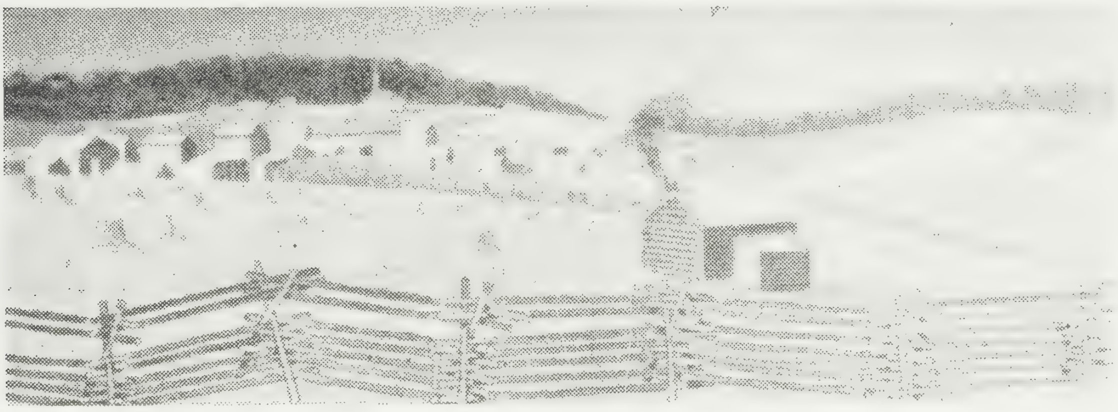
MOTHER LOVE

When at Goderich I heard a story worthy of record. A poor half-witted Frenchwoman came up to a village about thirteen miles below Goderich, where the ne'er-do-weel with whom she kept company deserted her. A man in whose house they had lived hired a canoe at his own expense to take her and her infant, of a year old, down to her friends on the St Clair, but a gale coming on they were driven on shore, and it being the beginning of winter the snow was on the ground. The canoe-man took her on to the next house, and went to secure his canoe. The poor foolish creature thought that she could get on five miles farther to the village she had left, through a wood path drifted up with snow, and not a house but one on the whole line. Accordingly she started and must have lost her way, for she was found lying on her back with her long hair frozen in the snow. But though He that made us had bestowed but little reason upon her, the instinct which He hath given to all living things for the preservation of their young was strong in her, for it appeared that when the poor natural thought she must perish, her last care was about her infant. She had stripped herself of her under petticoat, torn it to stripes, and wrapped it round her child; then taking off her hood she had bound it over its head and face. When found by the Indian traders she was insensible, but the child was warm and well. They carried her to the next house; it was found that her feet were frozen, as was her back. She was then taken on a bed to Goderich, where her feet came off. She was long before she recovered, but her motherly affection caused a strong feeling in favour of the poor weak-minded Sophie La Voie.

It was remarked to me, that to judge of good land you should look at the trees, for if they are healthy and of the right sort (maple, elm, bass, that is, lime tree, with some beech) the land is good. This is remarkably shewn in the district of Huron. The trees, particularly the elms, are the finest I have seen in Canada. When a party first started from Guelph to cut the road, they complained on their return that the Guelph trees had grown less.

WATERLOO SETTLERS

Coming out of the rich loamy land of Huron you all of a sudden come on the light soil of Waterloo, one of the oldest settlements in the province. It was settled by Germans from Pennsylvania nearly forty years ago, and a fine settlement they have made of it. The farms are large and well cultivated; the barns the largest I ever saw, built generally on the slope of a hill so as to give warm stables, byres, sheds, and poultry houses below them, and the houses good two story buildings. It is said that this township produces more wheat than the Eastern and Ottawa districts put together, and if you were to add to it its neighbour township of Dumfries, I dare say more than the whole lower province.



Ferrier, *The Early Days of Fergus*

FERGUS, 1837

GALT AND THE GRAND RIVER

I proceeded on to Galt, the capital of Dumfries, which is a thriving village. The Grand River at this place is as large a stream as can well be dammed, and a good dam dike has been thrown across it here, enough to supply power for all the mills that can ever be required here. I have got my report of the land I have visited ready, and am copying it for the purpose of sending it home. It is much more particular anent lands than this, which is a mere sketch of my journal; you can see it if you like, but as you have more to do with leather than land, I enclose you the prices of work in your trade, which I procured from a snob in Toronto. . . .

WHERE PROSPECTS ARE BEST

The result of all my travels and inquiries is that I would recommend to my friends to settle to the west of Brantford, but not farther west than

Chatham. I would give the preference to the district of Huron, and next to that the district of London.

I shall start for home in three days and set to work on my farm, so, as I have not so many wonders to see, I'll have the fewer to tell you of, and therefore I will not write till the beginning of the new year, when I hope to be able to inform you that my house is in order for my wife and family. With kindest regards to them and all inquiring friends, I remain, My dear John, &c.

R. S.

Galt, August.

APPENDIX C

A FEW REMARKS ON A TOUR IN UPPER CANADA IN 1837

Introduction

As half pay officers play no inconsiderable part in these volumes it is appropriate to outline their British background. They were Regulars, and, in training and experience, generally the superiors of Canadian militiamen of the day. But the purchase system of commissions in the British armed forces, for two centuries almost a principle of the British Constitution, was designed to prevent a recurrence of a military dictatorship like Cromwell's. It resulted, when intensified by a coincident control of Parliament through purchase and corruption, in an aristocratic dictatorship increasingly distasteful to those who were denied the property and privileges of the comparative few.*

The system sought to avoid social revolution by restricting the officer class to those whose property and fortunes predisposed them against change. All commissions were purchased, and so was each subsequent rise in rank. As the command of a regiment might entail an outlay of £25,000 to £40,000, such positions were frequently held by the nobility; and from lieutenant-colonel, promotions to general and lieutenant-general were made, usually through influence with the Royal

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*The combinations of half-pay military and naval officers with parsons and magistrates *in one person* were common all over the Kingdom, and they were among the abuses that most annoyed William Cobbett. In his classic *Rural Rides* he notes that 'In this very parish of Burghclerc there was until a few months ago a famous cock-parson . . . who had grafted the *parson* upon the *soldier*, and the *justice* upon the parson; for he died, a little while ago, a half-pay officer in the army, rector of two parishes, and chairman of the quarter sessions of the county of Hants!!' (Everyman's Library, II, pp. 157-8.)

Family and others in the highest places, including the seraglio of court mistresses.

There came to be, as well, a difference in status, as in qualifications and experience, between those who really served in wars and garrisons, and the more wealthy martinets who evaded service except of the parade-day and guard-of-honour type; for it was possible to go on half pay in the intervals between purchased promotions, while those who served with distinction but were relatively poor often waited half a lifetime for advancement. In general it was the latter class who emigrated to Canada.

Not until 1870 was the system abolished, and then largely because of mismanagement and inefficiency during the Crimean War. The horrible suffering and the bungled charge of the Light Brigade united with general incompetence in high places to place the War in the category of a national disgrace.* The names of settlements and streets in some parts of Ontario —for example, Perth County—indicate that veterans of the Crimean War settled in the province, but most of the half-pay officers arrived after one stage or another of the Napoleonic Wars. Particularly did a large number come some fifteen or twenty years after Waterloo, when financial depression and changing conditions had greatly circumscribed the opportunities for a genteel, idle, or sporting life in the Old Land. The author of *The Canadian Farmer's Travels in the United States of America* (1837) referred to half-pay officers in acrid tones.

> The curse of Canada [he wrote] is an unprincipled aristocracy whose pretensions to superiority above other settlers would disgust a dog. Many of these *would-be* aristocrats . . . have been Ensigns in the old country, but when they arrived in Canada they called themselves *Captains*. . . . These pretended captains get put in every office of trust and profit. They are slaves and sycophants to the Governor, and at elections are the captains of Orange mobs.

People who have been given an undue share of privilege and power will often abuse it, but any other faults of half-pay officers and other 'gentlemen' related closely to the way of life to which they had become accustomed in the Old Land; and the adjustment to a more independent and democratic life in Canada was as hard for the more arrogant of them as it was for those who disliked them for attempting to introduce the British class system into Canada.

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*See *The Reason Why*, by Cecil Woodham-Smith.

The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman

A Few Remarks on a Tour in Upper Canada in 1837

by

Captain Charles Gifford

(This newly discovered manuscript, printed for the first time by permission of Leon Konorowski of Oshawa, describes Captain Gifford's impressions as he surveyed the possibilities of various parts of Upper Canada before settling in Cobourg, where the Gifford home still stands—an English cottage on College Street a short distance south of old Victoria College. In editing it for publication the author has inserted capital letters where new sentences are obviously intended, and for proper names in the capitalization of which the diarist is highly inconsistent. Sufficient punctuation for readability has also been added, and the dates of entry printed in full. Otherwise the diary is exactly as written, with errors and inconsistencies in spelling unchanged. Captain Gifford made ink sketches of many of the settlements he visited, but they are so faded as to be almost valueless. In the following transcript of the journal all footnotes are the editor's. Illustrations appropriate to the text have been inserted.)

January 17.—Started from Cornwal and arrived in Kingston on the 19th. Excellent sleighing but poor entertainment. Almost froze in bed at Baldwins, charges very high. Spent a week in Kingston in a very pleasant manner.

January 24.—Visited Cape Vincent, U.S., and had a merry day among the yankies. Sat down to an excelent dinner, charges moderate. Was treated in a most friendly manner by a country man and thought of the old proverb, A Scotsman is never at home till he's abroad.

January 27.—Ernestown. Arrived here from Kingston after remaining there a week spent in visiting old acquaintances. After leaving Kingston the country is pretty well settled along the Waterloo or upper road, but in and about Erneston it looks better than near Kingston. The Timber is large and the soil good and dry. The farmers in general have good houses and their appearance is much more healthy than in many parts of the province. Many of them I remarkt had ruddy complexions, a thing rarely found in the American farmer.

January 28.—Put up at Haights Tavern about five miles below Nappanee. Excellent accommodations, charges moderate. Nappanee is a hansome little village sittuated on a river of that name, 3 or 4 good stores. Steam Boats from the Lake call. The Banks of the river slopes gradually to the water, the land rough.

January 29.—Breakfasted at Smiths 5 miles above Nappanee, accommodations good. Proceeded on to Bellvile, a place of considerable trade with a good harbour. There is four churches: Church of England and Scotland, Methodist, and Catholick. The country around it is well settled, and the country has a fine appearance from here to Trent.* Put up at Leachies, River Trent. Spent a pleasant evening along with the edditor of the Cobourg Star, M^r Chatterton, and an Irish Gentleman of excellent talent, the latter of whom proceeded with me to Cobourgh.

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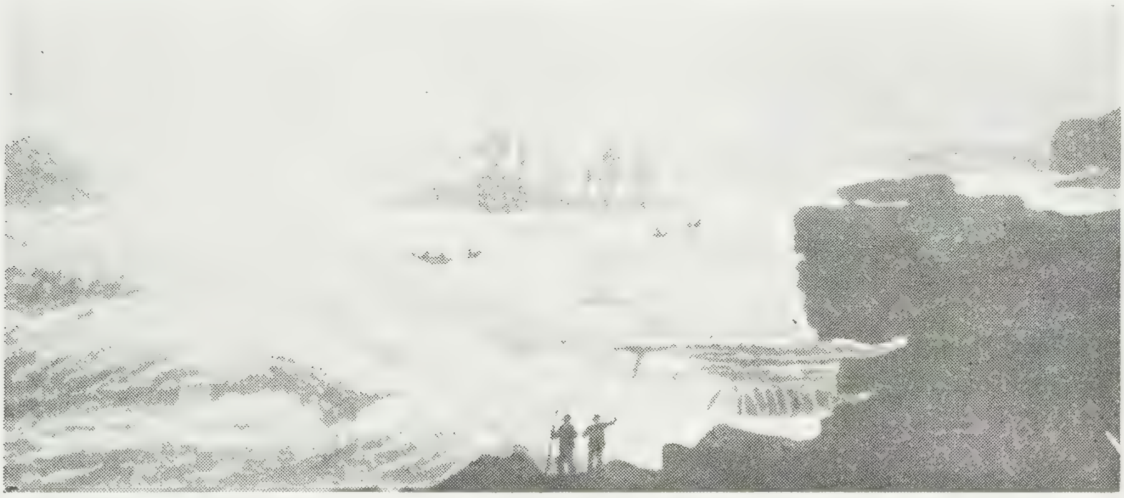
*The settlement was called Trent, River Trent, and Trent Port before the adoption of the name Trenton.

Hunter's Panoramic Guide

RAPIDS NEAR 'THE CEDARS', RIVER ST. LAWRENCE, 1857



Heriot, *Travels*, 1807 George Heriot

CASCADES OF THE ST. LAWRENCE

Public Archives of Canada Coke Smyth

POSTING ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

The Trent is a fine little Village, several good stores and Taverns. There is an excellent Bridge across the river, I should suppose about 700 yds long and roofed. They charge toll in summer.

January 30.—From thence proceeded to Brighton, a distance of 10 miles dureing which the country greatly improves in apearance. Brighton is a neat Village with several stores and 3 or 4 good taverens. Breakfasted and proceeded to Colbourne, a distance of 8 miles beautifull country. Perhaps the finest looking country in Canada is between Belvill and Cobourg, rich soil, fine buildings with a degree of neatness about them I have never seen before in the country. The view in many places is quite picturesque and romantic. After ascending a hill at some times you see Lake Ontario in all its beauty as far as the eye can reach.

The distance from the post road to the lake at Colbourne is about 2 miles. After proceeding about 8 or 10 miles further through a fine country of large clearances and rich buildings and orchards I came to Grafton, a thriving little village, good Taverns and some stores. 9 miles further is the Town of Cobourg which affoards a fine view, pleasantly situated on the margin of the Lake, with a population of from 2 to 3000 people. On an emminence to the east of the Town is the House of Wm Bolton, the Solicitor General of the Province, a fine building and a fine view.

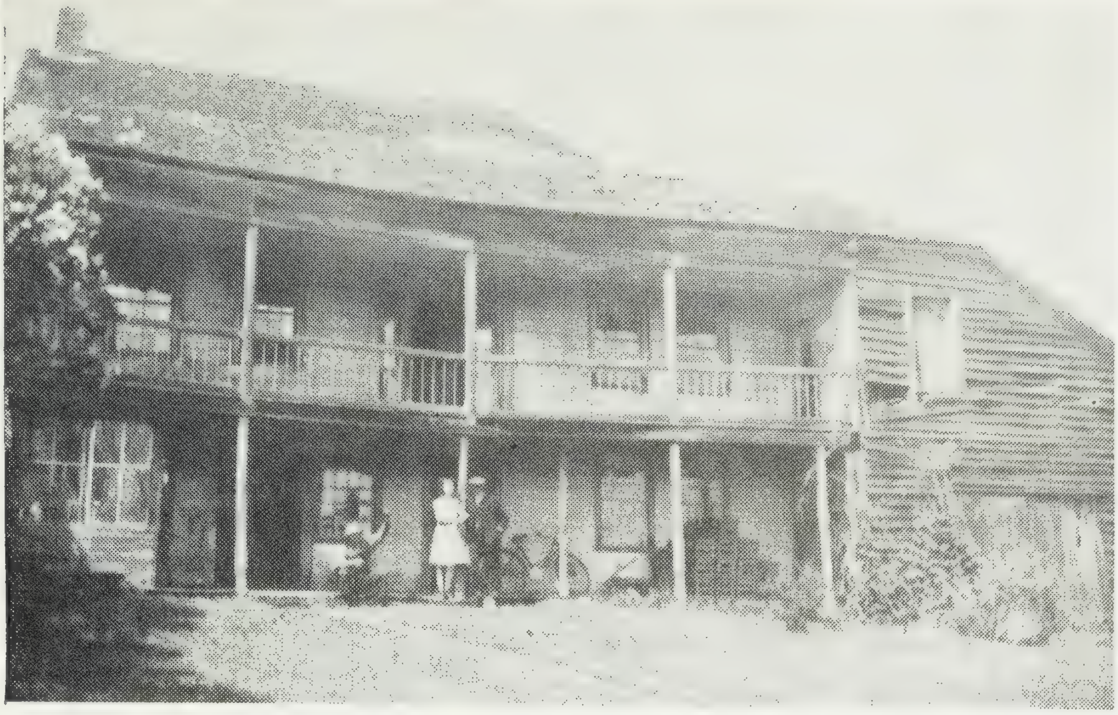
About a quarter of a mile to the north of the Town is a College or Ceminary built by the subscription of the people through the medium of the Weslyian Methodists and conformable to their rules and regulations. It is a hansome Building and has a very imposeing apearance. It is built of brick. There is at present about 80 or 90 schoolars in it who pay the moderate sum of £25 a year for boarding and education.

Put up at the Albion Hotel, one of the best in Canada, charges very moderate. Went to the church of England in the evening, two clergymen officiated. There is besides the English Church, a Scotch and Methodist and I believe a baptist Church. There is a wharf at Cobourg runs out about 700 feet in the Lake.

January 31.—Started from Cobourg and about two miles up came to Amherst where there is a very fine Court House built with a fine cut stone front executed in the Ionic order, a large portico 6 pilasters in front. There is a platform raised in front and winding steps goeing up to it.

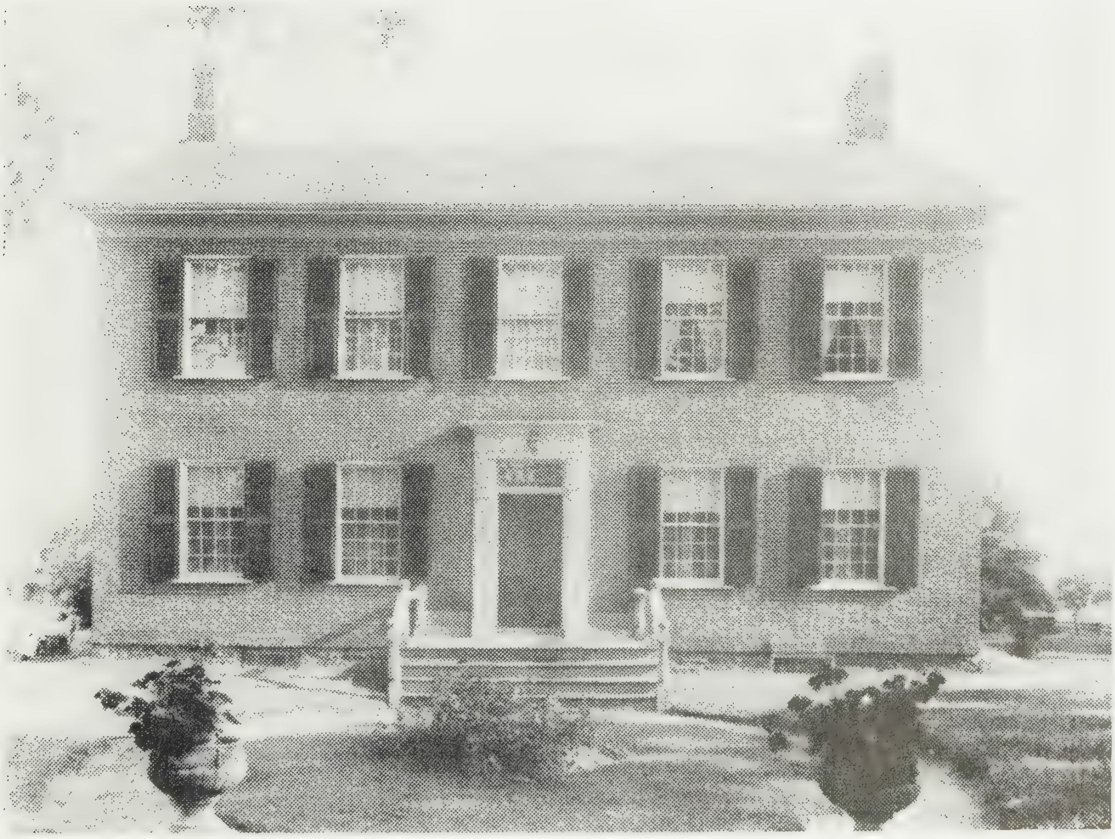
Five miles further is Port Hope, standing in a low situation with a river running through it. It contains about 500 inhabitants and seems to be flourishing. The country around it is inferior to that about Cobourg, and the timber is not so hansome. Land sells very high all along here. A good farm on the front with a good large clearance could not be had under £4 an acre. The land is more valuable on the front road than it is on the lake shore which is only a distance of two or three miles from it in most places.

Along from Port Hope to Darlingtown or Bowmanvile, a distance of 28 or 30 miles. There is good land but not so thickley settled as it is about Cobourg. There are several stores and Taverns along, but no place which I think deserves the name of a village. Darlington is but a small village, but riseing in importance fast. There is a sawmill and



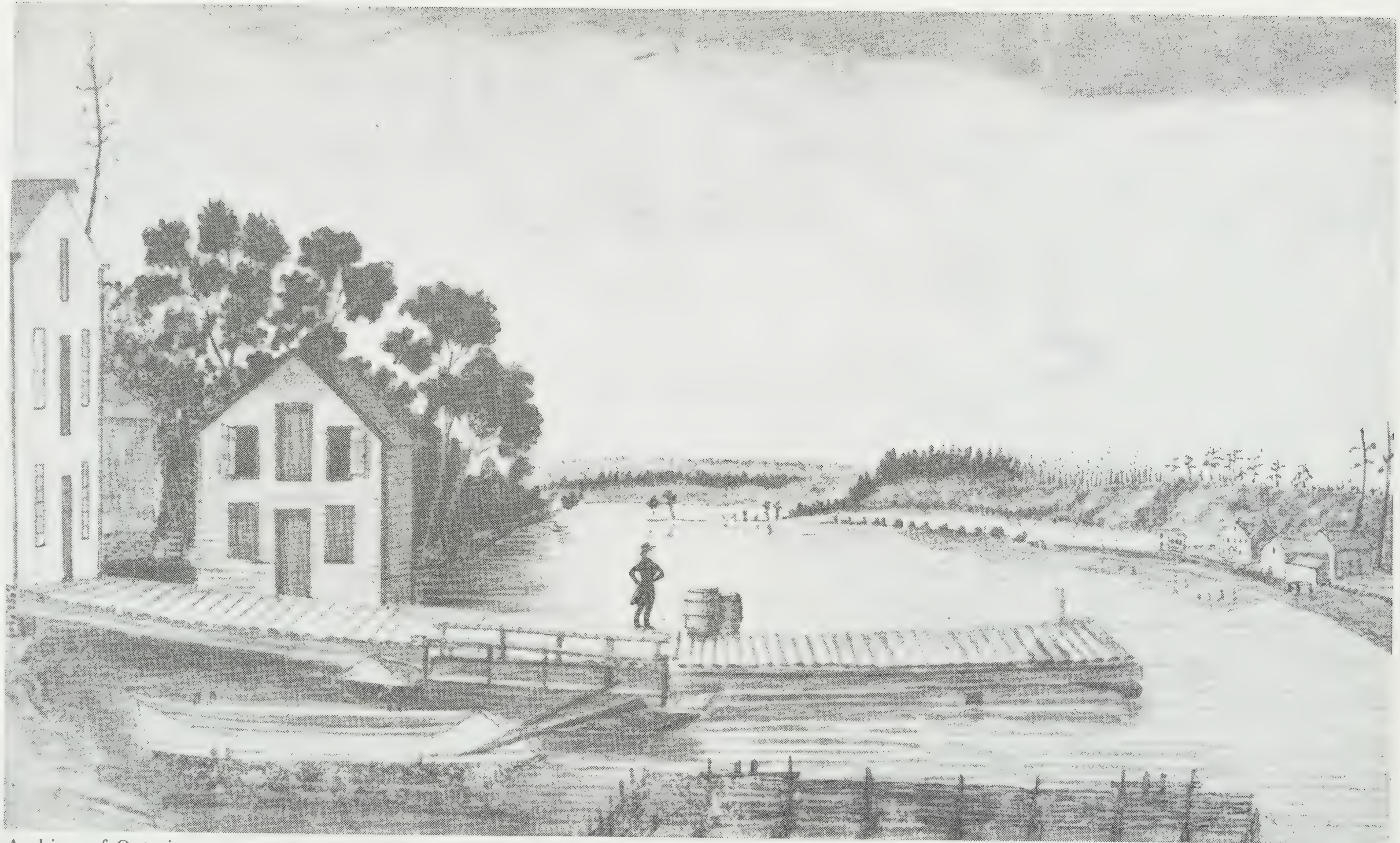
HALF-WAY HOUSE, DANFORTH ROAD

Located northeast of Cobourg, it is believed to have been erected before the War of 1812. It is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Davey, who take pride in its massive hand-hewn beams, 16-inch planks, six-foot fireplace and bake-oven, and old-time ballroom.



SPALDING'S INN, GRAFTON

The Toronto-Kingston Half-way House in staging days. This fine example of Georgian architecture is now the residence of Mrs. C. W. Dickson, who is proud of the ancient house, its fine floors, fireplaces, and other accoutrements of a bygone age.



Archives of Ontario

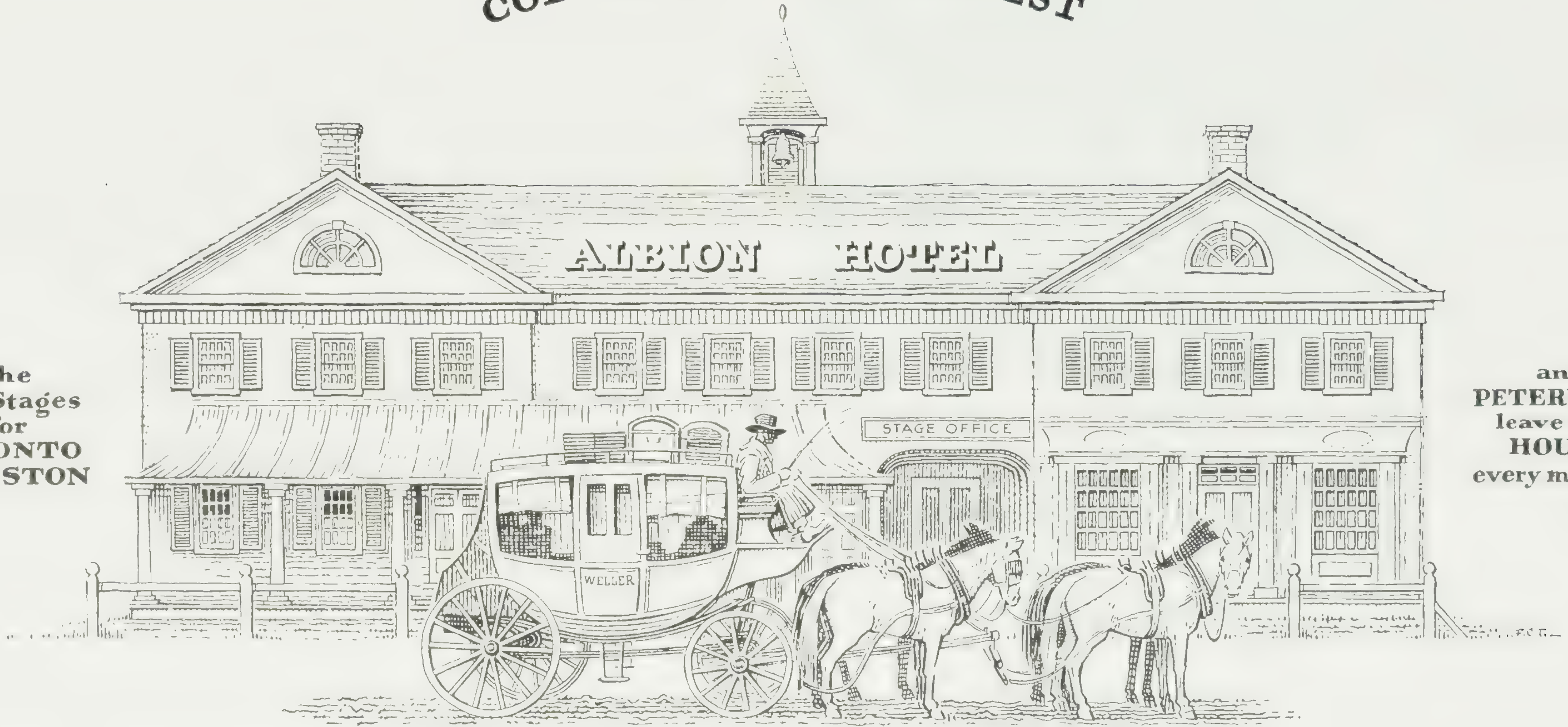
Capt. Thomas Burrowes

FERRY AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER TRENT, 1830

When Captain Gifford passed that way in 1837 he found 'an excellent Bridge across the river, I should suppose about 700 yds long and roofed. They charge toll in summer.'

COBOURG, CANADA WEST

The
Mail Stages
for
TORONTO
KINGSTON



and
PETERBORO
leave this
HOUSE
every morning

Baggage Conveyed to and from the Steam-Boat free of Expense.

J. A. COWLES

THE ALBION, EARLIER THE STEAMBOAT HOTEL, COBOURG

This fine redrawing of a small business-card of the eighteen-forties is by Frank C. Taylor of Cobourg.

Public Archives of Canada James Pattison Cockburn

BETWEEN COBOURG AND YORK, 1830

a grist mill there. About eight miles further on is the Township of Whitby said to be one of the finest in Canada.

February 1.—Proceeded on a tour through the township of Whitby. Called on a M^r Nichol, who instructed me to call upon a M^r Dow. He resides in the third concession. I drove out to his house and found him to be one of the most intelligent men in the country. He settled there in 1833 and is making a fortune. He told me that he sold £300 worth of wheat this winter and about £60 worth of pork. He has 300 acres of land which cost him about £1300. He is raising a fine stock of cattle and a Teeswater Bull which belongs to an agricultural society which is formed here.

I went out with him and took a view of his farm. The soil here is of a fine free rich substance and the lumber land is beautiful. Very little soft wood except in the fourth concession which is the worst in the township. The farmers till within these last few years have sold but little of anything, but the industry of the old country farmers are making them open their eyes to their own interest.

A little land can not be got here now without paying a great sum for it, and for five or six miles back it cannot be had under three pounds an acre, and on the front road throughout this township there can be none got under £5 an acre.

February 2.—Travelled all day through this Township as far in as the 9th concession. All the land good. Put up at hottel 30 miles from Toronto.

February 3.—Went to see Windsor harbour,* an excellent shelter for shiping, and a place which in my oppinion will yet come to be one of the most important places on lake Ontario. What strengthened my oppinion is that it is the only outlet for the produce of several of the finest Townships in Upper Canada.

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*The early name for the harbour of Whitby.

There was a petition brought before the house of Parliament for the grant of £9000 to improve it, which has passt the lower house and there is no doubt it will receive the sanction of the upper one. There is but little done yet in the way of building on it, but there is a great prospect next season. There was five or six schooners lying froze in there, one of them over 100 tons burthen. After takeing a view of it I proceeded to Toronto which is about 31 miles from Windsor Harbour. The Township of Pickering is the adjoining one to Whitby. For about a mile or two the land is pretty good but grows much worse as you proceed towards Toronto. The Township of Scarbrow is likewise a very poor soil, dry and sandy. Arrived at Toronto and put up at the Edinburgh Castle, Mr G. Henderson.

Canadian Illustrated News

WINTER SCENE, FRENCHMAN'S BAY, 1864

February 4.—Took a view of the city of Toronto which lies in a very low situation. It is fast riseing in importance and there is a great deal of mercantile buisiness carried on in it. There is some splendid stores in it and goods are sold as cheap as in Montreal. There is a great many extensive buildings in it among which we may rank the English Church, the market square, the parliament house, the Hospital, the agricultural Bank, and a great many more I am not prepared to mention.

After taking a survey of the Town I proceeded to the parliament house to hear the debates of that learned body. There is some very fine orators among them, among which is Mr Prince,* Dr Rolph the

*Colonel John Prince lives in Canadian history from having ordered the shooting without trial of five prisoners captured at the battle of Windsor in December 1838, when American Patriots raided over the border. From his admission that he had ordered them shot 'and it was done accordingly', the colonel was nicknamed Shot Accordingly Prince by the 'damned Reformers' of the day, but the 'damned Tories' held grand dinners and sang *The Fine Old English Gentleman* in his honour. (See the author's *The Lives and Times of the Patriots*, pp. 143-52.) Colonel Prince is believed to have been a son of one of George III's illegitimate sons.

Solicitor General, and some whose names I forget. Some plain matter of fact men, viz: Mr Gibson and M^{r} Morey [?], and of course some drones, for when is there a body amounting to such a number without them? On a seat elevated 3 steps above the floor of the house sits the Speaker, the Hono^{l}. Archibald Mcleane, a man I believe highly qualified for the situation he holds. The Legislative Council sit in the same house and are composed of 30 members. A little to the north of the parliament is the house of his Excel. the Governor, a plain but comfortable looking house. In the evening I proceeded to the Peninsula Hotel* where some of the sportsmen of the City had assembled to shoot quail. They were excellent marksmen. Many of them would not have disgraced the celebrated Locksley. The Peninsula is a Neck of land which runs into the lake and is about 2 miles from Toronto.

Courtesy Professor G. H. Needler

Anna Jameson

GIBRALTAR POINT, 1837

February 5.—Spent in makeing enquiries at the land offices and visiting public buildings. There is a good College in Toronto where the lower Branches are taught. There is to be another built next season where young men will receive a finished education.

February 6.—Was invited to hear some young men who have formed into a debateing society. The young men here in general are well educated and are well acquainted with politics. They dress in the height of the fasshion and there certainly is a great number of good looking people of both sexes here. The number of inhabitants is about 10,000 and has now a prospect of increasing fast. The land about this place is very bad, allmost entirley composed of sand and a gravelly clay for some distance around the city.

*See Vol. I, pp. 128-9, for the quaint advertisement of Michael O'Connor, early proprietor of this hotel, which he called the Retreat on the Peninsula in memory of his experiences in the Spanish Peninsular War under Sir John Moore. The horseboat that he operated for the convenience of those who patronised his hotel was named the *Sir John of the Peninsula.*

There is some very hansome buildings around the city which principaly belong to individuals connected with government, of which there is not a few. The harbour is formed by a neck of land which forms a curve at the extremity of which is a fine light house. The Harbour is defended by a fortification which stands near its mouth and is the headquarters of the Troops at Niagara, Lake Huron, and Erie. After leaving Toronto by the lake road, which is 6 miles nearer than the other, the land has but a very poor apearance and is very irregular. About 15 miles above Toronto is the river Credit, a good harbour for shipping and a thriveing village. There is no place of any importance further on till you come to Wellington Square, 36 miles from Toronto and 6 from Hamilton. Put up at W^{n} Square all night and had a hard time trying to support the British constitution against a yankie Radical. This is a new village and is improving fast.

Anna Jameson

MOUTH OF THE HUMBER, 1837

February 7.—Took a view of Burlington canal which is cut through the isthmus which divides the bay at Hamilton from the lake. Hamilton is a place wonderfully adapted by nature for a place of buisiness and is rapidly rising in importance. It is a little way back from the edge of the lake and is extending fast. There is one very fine street in it with some good stores, some good brick buildings, and a few stone. One of the most extensive is the house of M^{r} McNab, member for the Gore district. It is situated a little to the West of the Town. The Town sends a member to Parliament and the population is about 3000.

The country takes a great rise around Hamilton and is very rough and uneven near the town, but there is some excellent land in many places around it. There is some freestone here of a light coulour but as yet it has been but verry little used for building. There is limestone here of a redish grey color which makes very dark lime but it is said to be very good. The greater part of the good buildings are put up of brick which costs 25/ a thousand. There has been to many buildings goeing up these last 2 years for the demand and it is rather dull at present but it will soon revive again. The next place of importance is Guelph, a thriveing village which belongs to the Canada land Company.

February 8.—Left Hamilton for the London District, the Governors Road. The village of Ancaster 6 miles from Hamilton is the first place of any importance by that route. About 15 miles further is the fine Town of Brantford, affoarding a beautiful prospect. The Grand river or Ouse runs past the town and empties itself into Lake Erie about 30 miles from Brantford. There is a Steamboat comes up within 2 miles of the town and they are going to improve it so that they can come up the whole distance. The number of inhabitants here is about 2000, and there is 6 churches in the town. A little to the west of the town there is a good Bridge on the Grand river and a toll of 1 shilling levied on it.

Mrs. J. G. Simcoe

MOHAWK INDIAN VILLAGE, NEAR BRANTFORD, 1793

Brant's House   Council House   Mohawk Church

The Mohawk Church, erected in 1785, was the first in Upper Canada.

About 10 miles further is Burford, a small village. The land in general is pretty good along here but rather sandy. Before leaving this part of the country I cannot but make a remark or two on the generall appearance of the country. It affords a beautiful prospect. In many parts on ascending an emminence you can have a view of a beautiful and rich country all around you for many miles. There is perhaps few prospects in Canada more grand than a view of Brantford and the surounding country from an emminence to the east of town.

From Burford I proceeded to Long Point on the shores of Lake Erie, being a distance of about 30 miles. The general appearance of the country in this direction is good and the farmers appear to be verry comfortable. It is well watered but there is a great scarcity of pine and other soft woods. The adjoining Township to Burford is Windham, partly swampy and not so well settled as the former. The next is Charlotevile.

There is some apparrently thriving villages on this route, the first being Oakland, and the next a few miles further is Waterford, the only village I have ever seen in this country without a Tavern. Colbourne is next, and then Wellington and Simcoe and Vitoria, all within a few miles of each other. Charlotevile fronts Lake Erie. There is here a very extensive foundary and plenty of Iron ore. The land in the neighbourhood of the Lake is very rough in many places and of an inferior quallity.

As it was my intention to take a more minute view of this district than any other I proceeded from Lake Shore and spent from the last mentioned date (8th Feb) till the 13th in viewing the Townships of Norwich and East and West Oxford. In these Townships the land generaly speaking is good, though many parts are thinley settled. The Big Bear creek runs through the Township of Norwich. The Township of Oxford classed under east, West and north is one of the best in Canada, well settled with several little villages among which is Beachvill and Ingersoll, the former about 30 and the latter 24 miles from London village. From the former of these places I proceeded to Zora, a township which joins Oxford on its north side and is principally settled with Scotch from the north highlands.

I was favoured with a letter of introduction to the Postmaster of the little village of Embro and received by that gentleman and his amiable Laidy in a manner highly gratifying to my feelings. After a detention of several days in and near Embro, in which place I formed a very pleasant acquaintance with some very kind and intelligent young men, I took my leave on the 19th and proceeded on to London which place I reached on the evening of the 20th. It has perhaps made as rapid progress as any village in Canada in population, it not being more than 10 years since it was commenced and it now has a population of 2000. This village was first commenced by the exertions of Collonal Talbot, and by him divided into town lots of half an acre each. As yet the principal part of the buildings are wood but they are commencing to build brick houses. There is few stone here except what is used for lime. The court house is a large and substantial brick Building and well finished inside.

Immediately opposite London is the Township of Westminster, one of the many good tracts of land about here. The western part of this township is well settled and the whole has the character of being good land. The great Warncliff Road runs through the 2d concession of this township about 6 miles, where it intersects the North Street about 12 miles from St. Thomas, which is situated about 14 miles south of London. The country around it is well cleared and the farmers look pretty comfortable.

St. Thomas is a thriving village with about 1000 inhabitants and is built on an emminence. Some thriveing merchants and mechanics, principally Americans and Canadians with a few Scotch and Irish. This place is about 10 miles from the shore of L. Erie. After viewing this place I took a view of the east part of Westminster, newly settled but improving fast. Here the people appear well contented and are ariving fast at comfort. In the 5th 6th and 7th concessions the country is but little cleared as yet, but it is fast takeing up.

This part of the country abounds with deer and wild Turkeys. One of the new settlers, a Scotshman, told me he had shot seven this winter of the finest deer he ever saw. The quality of the soil here is a rich light loam with a bed of clay. There is some limestone here in small quantities in the ground which is very usefull. There is likewise some granite but they are merely loose stones and there has been no quaries found as yet although the bed of the Thames appears to be rocky in some places.

The Indians procure a very ritch oil from the surface of the water of this river which the inhabitants say is very usefull for sores or distempers in cattle. The method they use to collect it is by goeing out in their canoes with a large blanket and spreading it on the surface of the water where the oil is, by which means the oil adheres to the blanket which they take ashore and force it out by twisting it. They sell it for a York shilling per quart. The reason assigned for this oil being on the water is the ritchness of the soil along the banks.

There seems at the present time to be a great degree of discontentment among the inhabitants of this part of the province. Some of their principal complaints seem to be the want of public improvements, the Clergy reserve Question, and the 57 rectories, the great salleries given to public officers, and the fear of heavy taxation. It is not my intention to enter on a detail of how far I may think they are just in trying to resent what they concider injurious to the wellfare of the province, but I will say this far, that it would be much better for many that lounge about bar rooms, drinking rum and spouting against the government, were they to attend to the comfort of their own fireside and leave those things to providence and the penetration of those that are entrusted to manage them. I myself have seen some of the most ignorant of the working classes discussing pollitics for hours in a tavern, and their horses standing outside in the cold, with a vehemence that would have suited Occonnel,* and at the same time they did not know who was member for the country they resided in. There is many in and around London selling their property for one half its real value and proceeding to Michigan and Ellinois. In London I had the pleasure of getting introduced to Mr Talbot, the Gentleman who wrote the book called the 5 years residence which I had before read and found it in most instances to be pretty correct when referring to the maners and customs of the Americans and Canadians.**

March 1.—Commenced my journey from London downwards on this day. The news of the complete success of the railroad Question had reached and appeared to difuse a new spirit in all parties. It will no doubt be both advantageous to the Farmer and Merchant as well as to the Traveler. I have read the report of the Head Engineer on the subject who by way of encouragement of the work states that in the cource of Ten years the Erie Canal, says that Gentleman, has paid the principal and interest of all its costs, and asserts that this work would pay in much less time the expenditure of it. His oppinion is that the whole expence of the work might not exceed £234,423.7.6, the distance of the railroad to be 142 miles 13 chains from Hamilton to Chatham on the River Thames.

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*Presumably the Irish orator Daniel O'Connell (1775-1837).

**Edward Talbot was the author of *Five Years' Residence in the Canadas* (1824). He was London's first newspaper publisher.

On taking leave of my friends at London I proceed on to Beachvile that Evening by my former route, and from thence returned towards Hamilton by Dundas Street. Along this route the country is finely settled and is greatly cleared. In and around Oxford there is a great many people of Capital who are expending large sums in making improvements. There is several naval and military Officers around this part of the country some of whom although brought up in the highest station in society set a good example to the lower orders of emigrants, many of whom come out to this country with the idea that they can make themselves comfortable with little exertions. I have seen Cournals* & Captains teaming their own oxen as chearfully as if they had been brought up to it.

The village of Paris in the Township of Blenhim, is so called from the great abundance of Plaster of Paris which is found there and is manufactored to a considerable extent. This village is in the Gore District. To the east of it is the Township of Dumfreys, one of the best settled townships in the upper province. The inhabitants are principaly Scotch. This is a fine wheat country and land sells verry high. Joining to it is Beverly of an inferior quality and not much settled as yet. Dundas in the Township of Flambrough is a flourishing village about 3 miles from the head of Burlington Bay & five from Hamilton. Its situation is rather low and ague is prevailent here. This disease, which so much has been said about, is not near as bad in this upper part of the province as it has been reported. In fact the Old Country people universaly concur in allowing it to be much more healthy than at home. The winters seem by the account of some of the old settlers to have undergone a material change within these last 8 or 10 years. The account they give is this, that previous to that time, that is in the London District, the snow afforded but few opportunities of sleighing in the course of the winter, and a very respectable gentleman informed me that some winters he could not get more than one load of grain to the mill with it through the course of the winter, whereas at present there has been excellent sleighing at least 3 months.

With regard to the character and disposishion of the Americans, who are very plentyfull in the upper province, there might be a remark or two passt which is I think near the truth. The Yankie is reserved, collected, and very distrustfull in his manners. His humour is pensive but uniform. His bearing is ungracefull but not mean. His thoughts are limmited but practical. He has a head full of wild speculations and is very fond of enterprise, he is continualy fond of making new inventions, some in fact of a very ingenious description. Any new invention is generaly termed a yankie scheme. The character of the native

*It seems peculiar that a British captain would get no closer than 'cournal' and 'collonal' to spell the title of his superior officer.

Canadian differs but little from that of the yankie, but any inference that might be drawn would be rather favorable to the latter. The Yankie looses a law suit at court without feeling the same degree of chagrin the old country man feels, and will ask his opponent to ride home in his sleigh with as much frankness as if nothing had happened, comforting himself with the notion that he can cheat him as much the first opportunity he has of tradeing with him, which he often acomplishes, more especially if he is an old countryman. He cheats his nearest relation as soon as a stranger and justifies himself by saying there is no friendship in trade. It is my humble opinion that a great part of the national character of the Yankie is formed by adhering to the admonition of their patron saint Doctor Franklin, who instilled into their mind the love of gain as one of the greatest acquirements of the young adventurer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

It is now over thirty years since I commenced research into the vast literature of Canadian settlement and early life. The present work's basis, consequently, is a cumulative mass of material, manuscript and printed. Extensive bibliographies were given in *Early Life in Upper Canada* (1933), *Toronto: From Trading Post to Great City* (1934), *The Great Migration* (1937), *The Lives and Times of the Patriots* (1938), and in Volume 4 of the five-volume series *Pioneer Inns and Taverns* (1953-1962). For one important region much of the most valuable source material has been printed in the first volume of the Ontario Government and Champlain Society series, *The Valley of the Trent* (1957); while a great deal of commentary upon the history of education in Ontario is presented in the centennial volume prepared for the Ontario Educational Association, *In the Cause of Education* (1960). Rather than a formal list of the numerous sources upon which *The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman* is based, it appears preferable, consequently, to give a bibliographical commentary upon the various types of material which have been of special value, with lists of the chief titles.

My first book *Early Life in Upper Canada* was not, of course, comprehensive of the entire subject, but quite a full treatment was given to the development of travel and transportation and to numerous aspects of pioneer life. The present work is intended to supplement that book, particularly in the highly detailed treatment it gives for the first time to the backwoodsman and the development of farm life, but it provides as well an account of the general background of social life in the periods of early and later 'pioneers', and well beyond into the time when advanced farming practices characterized 'the front', with the primitive still usual in new settlements and persisting in 'the backwoods' of older-settled regions.

(1) LOCAL HISTORIES

While only a small number of the following books on the history of Ontario counties, townships, towns, and other localities have been of use in the compilation of *The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman*, it has been thought worthwhile to provide an extensive list. Many of the more valuable were written early, while some of the first settlers were still alive. The list is, however, representative rather than comprehensive. Northern and Northwestern Ontario are not included. The titles are abbreviated.

(a) *Published Prior to 1900*

Bâby, William: *Souvenirs of the Past* (1896)
Boyle, David: *Scarborough* (1896)
Canniff, William: *Settlement of Upper Canada* (1869)
Croil, James: *Dundas County* (1861)
Eby, Ezra: *Waterloo Township* (1895–96)
Ermatinger, Edward: *The Talbot Settlement* (1859)
Ferrier, A. D.: *Fergus* (1866)
Gourlay, J. L.: *The Ottawa Valley* (1896)
Kirby, William: *The United Empire Loyalists* (1884)
Kirby, William: *The Annals of Niagara* (1896)
Johnston, William: *Pioneers of Blanshard* (1899)
Leavitt, T. W. H.: *Leeds and Grenville* (1879)
Lett, W. P.: *Recollections of Bytown* (1874)
Lizars, R. and K.: *In the Days of the Canada Company* (1896)
Mackay, W. A.: *Pioneer Life in Zorra* (1899)
Owen, E. A.: *Long Point Settlement* (1898)
Poole, Thomas: *Peterborough County* (1867)
Pringle, J. F.: *Lunenburgh* (1890)
Rice, A. B.: *Welland County* (1887)
Riddell, Walter: *Hamilton Township* (1897)
Scadding, Henry: *Toronto of Old* (1873)
Smith, J. H.: *County of Wentworth* (1897)
Woods, R. S.: *Western Peninsula* (1896)
Young, James: *Galt and Dumfries* (1880)

(b) *Published Since 1900*

Brown, W. M.: *The Queen's Bush* (1932)
Bull, W. P.: *The Perkins Bull Historical Series* [on Peel County] (1930's)
Carnochan, J.: *Niagara* (1914)
Carter, J. S.: *Dundas County* (1905)

Clarke, Gwendoline P.: *Halton's Pages of the Past* (1955)
Craick, W. A.: *Port Hope* (1901)
Cummings, H. R.: *Early Days in Haliburton* (1962)
Davies, Blodwen: *Storied York* (1931)
Dunham, B. Mabel: *The Trail of the Conestoga* (1924)
Dunham, B. Mabel: *Grand River* (1945)
Ermatinger, C. O.: *The Talbot Regime* (1904)
Fairbairn, J. B.: *Bowmanville* (1905)
Farewell, J. E.: *Ontario County* (1907)
Given, R. A.: *Etobicoke* (1950)
Guillet, Edwin C.: *Toronto: from Trading Post to Great City* (1934)
Guillet, Edwin C.: *Pioneer Life in York County* (1946)
Guillet, Edwin C.: *Cobourg: 1798–1948* (1948)
Haydon, Andrew: *District of Bathurst* (1925)
Herrington, W. S.: *Lennox and Addington* (1913)
Hunter, A. F.: *Simcoe County* (1909)
Johnson, William: *Perth County* (1903)
Johnston, C. M.: *The Head of the Lake* (1958)
Johnston,Thomas: *Wiarton and the Bruce Peninsula* (1936)
Kaiser, Thomas: *Oshawa* (1921)
Kennedy, David: *Guelph and Bruce County* (1903)
Kirkconnell, Watson: *Victoria County* (1921)
Lauriston, Victor: *Lambton's Hundred Years* (1949)
Lizars, K. M.: *The Valley of the Humber* (1913)
Machar, A. M.: *Old Kingston* (1908)
Marsh, E. L.: *Grey County* (1931)
Mathews, Hazel: *Oakville and the Sixteen* (1953)
Mikel, William: *Belleville* (1943)
Mitchell, John: *York County* (1952)
Morrison, Neil: *Garden Gateway to Canada* (1954)
Muir, R. C.: *Burford* (1913)
Neal, F.: *Township of Sandwich* (1909)
Reville, F. D.: *Brant County* (1920)
Reaman, G. E.: *The Trail of the Black Walnut* (1957)
Robertson, Norman: *County of Bruce* (1906)
Robinson, Percy J.: *Toronto During the French Régime* (1933)
Ross, A. H. D.: *Ottawa* (1927)
Smith, D.A.: *At the Forks of the Grand* (1956)
Squair, John: *Darlington and Clarke* (1927)
Walton, J. M.: *Kettleby* (1939)

Weaver, Emily: *The Counties of Ontario* (1913)
Weir, F. G.: *Scugog and Its Environs* (1927)
Wood, W. R.: *Past Years in Pickering* (1911)
Wright, A. W.: *Pioneer Days in Nicholl* (1924)
Wright, A. W.: *Mount Forest and Surrounding Townships* (1928)

These lists contain most of the better-known, but there are numerous others; and there are also many regional, topographical, and biographical studies appearing in the records of the Ontario Historical Society, the Ontario Land Surveyors, proceedings of local historical societies, and in newspapers and other periodicals; nor should we omit county historical atlases. There are as well a large number of local history booklets which have appeared in the past—and are being produced increasingly all over the province—to mark centennials, Old Home weeks, and Old Boys' reunions. During extensive travels through the province I have obtained copies of a large number of them, some towns having published three or four down through the years. They are in most instances rare, and in general the earlier productions are more valuable as they contain records of the earliest times, which tend to be omitted in those more recently published. In some districts as well, all or parts of local histories long out of print have been reprinted. If a booklet is to be singled out as an excellent model of a brief yet attractive and profusely illustrated historical guidebook on early times it is *A Guide to Waterloo County* produced by the Waterloo Trust and Savings Company; but a hundred other worthwhile productions might be mentioned.

(2) RECORDS OF PIONEER LIFE

While there is a good deal of overlapping if we are dogmatic in classifying such sources, personal records of early life include reminiscences, diaries, and letters, in manuscript, published individually, or in collections and compilations by local or general historians.

Loyalist reminiscences and records are quoted by William Canniff and others among comparatively early writers, and in more recent times and particularly in one of the Champlain Society volumes, edited by J. J. Talman. In general they tend to be more sketchy and less valuable than our later records.

For the succeeding generation of settlers most of the best accounts by the settlers themselves are those by a group along the valley of the Trent. Catherine Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836), Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) and *Life in the Clearings versus the Bush* (1853), and their brother Samuel Strickland's *Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West* (1853) have been widely known since publication. Thomas Need's *Six Years in the Bush* (1838), Frances Stewart's *Our Forest Home* (1889), John Langton's letters and his sister Anne's journal, published respectively in 1926 and 1950 are of similar value; and *Letters from Muskoka* by 'An Emigrant Lady' (1878) describes conditions in a later-settled region. To some extent fictitious but nonetheless valuable are the Radcliff-Magrath letters published under the title *Authentic Letters from Upper Canada* (1833).

In most cases much less literate are collections of letters relative to the settlement and subsequent experiences of conducted or assisted emigrations. Prominent among these are *Letters from Sussex Emigrants* (1833), *Letters from Dorking Emigrants Who Went to Canada in the Spring of 1832*, John R. Godley's *Letters from America* (1844), and *Letters from Poor Persons Who Emigrated to Canada from the Parish of Frome in the County of Somerset* (1945). Many letters are printed in Andrew Picken's *The Canadas* (1832), and others in various guidebooks and travel accounts. Important letters by Thomas Stewart and Charles Rubidge, both narratives of their experiences in settling in Upper Canada, are printed in Basil Hall's *Travels in North America* (1823), Vol. I, pp. 307-339, and reprinted in the author's *The Valley of the Trent* (1957), pp. 345-58.

Much of value on early life is to be found in W. H. Smith's *Canada: Past, Present, and Future* (1851), and more recently —accompanied by atrocious illustrations—in W. L. Smith's *Pioneers of Old Ontario* (1923). Of outstanding value is William Gourlay's *Statistical Account of Upper Canada* (1822) and Lord Durham's Report (1839). Several volumes on conditions in the Canadas in the 1840's were published. Henry Taylor put out one in 1843 and it was reprinted subsequently. W. S. Darling's *Sketches of Canadian Life* (1849) and Joseph Abbott's *Philip Musgrave* (1846) add greatly to our knowledge of that period; while letters and a diary in Abbott's *The Emigrant to North America* (1844) cover the earlier period as well, as does John Mactaggart's *Three Years in Canada* (1829), Dr. William Dunlop's two books (1832 and 1859), and Adam Fergusson's *Practical Notes* (1834) and his estimate of agricultural conditions, published in 1832.

As the years passed, similar records were published on backwoods life in various districts. Among others are J. J. E. Linton's *Life of a Backwoodsman* (1850), Mrs. Copleston's *Canada* (1861), and J. C. Geikie's *George Stanley, or Life in the Woods* (1864). There are as well a large number of travel books which incorporate varying periods of residence, such as William Brown's *America: a Four Years' Residence* (1849) and the books of Patrick Shirreff, John Howison, and Edward Talbot, to mention but a few. Philemon Wright's account of the early settlement of Hull (printed in Andrew Picken's *The Canadas*) is one of the classics of pioneering. Specialized studies include the reminiscences of fugitive slaves who settled in Upper Canada, contained in Benjamin Drew's *The Refugees* (1856).

Reminiscences of other types have frequently been used in compiling *The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman*. Of great value was Walter Riddell's *Historical Sketch of the Township of Hamilton* because of its emphasis upon 'first things' in agriculture. G. H. Green's books on early times in Huron County —*The Old Log School* (1939) and *The Old Log House* (1948)—have been drawn upon, as have Dr. Scadding's *Toronto of Old* (1873), Thomas Conant's two books—*Upper Canada Sketches* (1898) and *Life in Canada* (1903), John Carruthers' *Retrospect* (1861), Samuel Thompson's *Reminiscences* (1884), Egerton Ryerson's *Story of My Life* (1883), *The Life and Times of Anson Green* (1877), and lesser manuscript reminiscences (or in letters to the press or to the author) of William Matheson, Samuel Birdsall, William R. Riddell, and L. F. Kipp.

Of value because of their scope have been Canniff Haight's *Country Life in Canada Fifty Years Ago* (1885) and M. G. Scherck's *Pen Pictures of Early Pioneer Life in Upper Canada* (1905). Biographical histories of several regions, among them of York, Kent, Waterloo, Lambton, and Peterborough counties, are valuable local records. Obituary notices of other types, in the press and in graveyards, have also been of use. For the experiences of later 'pioneers' in the Muskoka region Fred DelaFosse's *English Bloods* (1930) has been of special value.

Among the most useful printed diaries are those of Thomas

Need (*Six Years in the Bush*, 1838) and Anne Langton (*A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada*, 1950). Important for the earlier period are John Goldie's *Diary of a Journey through Upper Canada* (1819) and Philip Stansbury's *Pedestrian Tour in North America* (1822). Available only recently are some of Charles Fothergill's numerous journals and notebooks; his diary for February 1817 was first printed in large part in the author's *Pioneer Inns and Taverns*, Volume IV. Almost unique in the very earliest period of the province's settlement is the diary of Mrs. J. G. Simcoe, edited by John Ross Robertson (1911).

From the point of view of farming the most useful diary is that of Joseph Abbott. The Proudfoot diary has been printed in part and contains a great deal of interest. John Howard's printed journal (a great deal more of it is in manuscript in the Baldwin Room of the Toronto Public Library) and that of John Roberts relate largely to the Atlantic crossing, while Phoebe Roberts' diary records a remarkable pedestrian tour of Upper Canada in the interest of the Society of Friends. John Thomson's diary and that of Mary O'Brien, both relating to the Lake Simcoe region, are in the Archives of Ontario, and T. H. Ware's notes are in his sketchbook (Toronto Public Library). A considerable number of other manuscript or typescript diaries in the Toronto Public Library have been consulted, but most of them are in content thin, containing but little that is not available in more detail elsewhere. The following, however, provided items of interest: the Mickle family Book, records left by William Adair and Samuel Birdsall, and Thomas Forster's Account Book. These, among many others, are listed in *Canadian Diaries and Autobiographies*, compiled by William Matthews (University of California Press, 1950). Obtained later (1956) by the Library are fifteen volumes of manuscript records kept by John Howard of Colborne Lodge, High Park, Toronto, who was not only an architect, artist, and teacher, but also a 'gentleman farmer'. A copy of the records of the Beamsville Baptist Church from 1807 to 1859 was given to the author by the Reverend L. F. Kipp of Toronto, and it is a commentary—if not a reflection—upon early religious life.

(3) EMIGRANT GUIDEBOOKS

The numerous guidebooks offering advice to those contemplating emigration from the Old World to the New were of special value for source material on settlement and backwoods life. Some of their writers were practising farmers, while others had spent some years as settlers in Upper Canada. Many more were consulted, but the following provided the most useful material:

Abbott, Joseph: *The Emigrant to North America* (1844)
Bell, William: *Hints to Emigrants* (1824)
Buchanan, A. C.: *Emigration Practically Considered* (1828)
Christie, A. J.: *The Emigrant's Assistant* (1821)
'An English Farmer': *A Few Plain Directions* (1820)
'An Ex-Settler': *Canada in the Years 1832, -33, and 34* (1835)
Grece, C. F.: *Facts and Observations* (1819)
Henry, George: *The Emigrant's Guide* (18 ?)
Hickey, William: *Hints on Emigration* (1834)
Hill, George A.: *A Guide for Emigrants* (1834)
Inches, James: *Letters on Emigration* (1836)
Pickering, Joseph: *Inquiries of an Emigrant* (1831)

An unprinted manuscript booklet, which I saw some ten years ago in the Ketcheson collection, Richmond Hill, provided a few interesting sidelights. It is entitled 'Advice to Settlers in Canada' and contains no reference to its author, but it would appear that he was settled in the St. Lawrence region about the 1840's. Another recently discovered manuscript of value contains notes on a tour of Upper Canada in 1837 by Captain Charles Gifford. It is printed for the first time in Appendix C.

Mrs. Catharine Traill's *The Female Emigrant's Guide* (1854), while too late for settlers of the early period, must have aided a great many women to adjust themselves to farm processes and recipes. A booklet she quotes, Mrs. Child's *The American Frugal Housewife* (Sixteenth Edition, 1835), was an American publication by a prolific writer.

(4) TRAVEL BOOKS

During the more than thirty years that I have been writing books on emigration, settlement, and pioneer life I have read well over one hundred travel books to obtain contemporary experiences and opinions, so important for their authentic flavour. For this purpose the books of greatest value have been those written by farmers, or by those who emphasized agricultural conditions; but sidelights of every type are found in the others, relative both to farming and to all the other conditions that go to make up early life. The following have been of special value:

Abdy, E. S.: *Journal of a Residence and Tour* (1835)
Alexander, Sir James: *Transatlantic Sketches* (1833)
Alexander, Sir James: *L'Acadie, or Seven Years' Explorations* (1849)
Beaven, James: *Recreations of a Long Vacation* (1845)
Bigsby, J. J.: *The Shoe and Canoe* (1850)
Brown, J. B.: *Views of Canada and the Colonists* (1844)
Buckingham, J. S.: *Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick* (1839)
Coke, E. T.: *A Subaltern's Furlough* (1833)
Copleston, Mrs. Edward: *Canada: Why We Live in It* (1861)
Darling, Rev. Stewart: *Sketches of Canadian Life* (1849)
Daubeny, Charles: *Journal of a Tour* (1844)
Davis, Robert: *The Canadian Farmer's Travels* (1837)
Dixon, Rev. James: *Personal Narrative of a Tour* (1849)
'An Emigrant Lady': *Letters from Muskoka* (1878)
Fidler, Rev. Isaac: *Observations on the Professions* (1833)
Fowler, Thomas: *Journal of a Tour* (1832)
Hall, Basil: *Travels in America* (1829)
Hamilton, Thomas: *Men and Manners in America* (1832)
Head, Sir F. B.: *The Emigrant* (1846)
Head, Sir George: *Forest Scenes and Incidents* (1829)
Herbert, H. W.: *Frank Forester's Horse and Horsemanship* (1857)
Howison, John: *Sketches of Upper Canada* (1821)
Jameson, Anna: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles* (1838)
Johnstone, Walter: *Travels* (1820)
Journal of a Wanderer (1844)
Kingston, W. H. G.: *Western Wanderings* (1856)
Lamond, Robert: *Narrative* (1821)
La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Duc de: *Travels* (1799)
Logan, James: *Notes of a Journey* (1838)
M'Donald, John: *Narrative of a Voyage* (1822)
Palmer, John: *Travels* (1818)
Rose, Rev. A. H. W.: *Canada in 1849* (1849)
Shirreff, Patrick: *A Tour through North America* (1835)
Talbot, E. A.: *Five Years' Residence* (1824)

Taylor, Henry: *Journal of a Tour* (1840)
Taylor, James: *Narrative of a Journey* (1846)
Warburton, Eliot: *Hochelaga* (1846)
Weld, Isaac: *Travels* (1799)
Wilkie, David: *Sketches of a Summer Trip* (1837)

(5) NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Farm journals more or less contemporary with settlement have provided considerable material on farm life. The following have been quoted, particularly on improved methods, machines, and stock: *British American Cultivator*, *Canadian Champion*, *Canadian Farmer*, *Genesee Farmer*, *Canadian Agriculturist*; also the *Transactions* of the Board of Agriculture. Other early publications cited are the *Victoria Magazine*, *Literary Garland*, *Tucker's Annual Register*, *Patrick Swift's Almanac for 1834*, and the *Canadian Magazine* of 1852. Newspapers and a large number of collateral and corroboratory sources which have provided material are named in the text or footnotes where they have been used, and need not be repeated here.

(6) SECONDARY SOURCES

Apart from others named in the foregoing specialized lists and in footnotes, two secondary sources of prime importance are Merrill Denison's *Harvest Triumphant* (1948), a history of Massey-Harris and of farm machinery, and R. L. Jones' *History of Agriculture in Ontario, 1613–1880* (1946). Emily Weaver's *The Counties of Ontario* (1913) and Isabel Skelton's *The Backwoodswoman* (1924) have furnished items of interest, as have the Perkins Bull Historical Series, and particularly the volume on medical conditions. Two excellent publications illuminate religious history, and especially the obsession with and repression of sex and 'sin'. They are *Sex in History* (1953) and *The Angel-Makers* (1958), both by the noted English psychiatrist-historian Gordon Rattray Taylor.

(7) PICTORIAL ILLUSTRATIONS

While some of the illustrations in *The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman* are from standard sources like *Canadian Scenery* (1840), Currier & Ives prints, stereopticon views, county historical atlases, the *Canadian Illustrated News*, the *Illustrated London News*, *The Dominion Illustrated*, and the series of Tremaine maps, by far the greater number are from the works of nearly one hundred artists, largely contemporary with the period of pioneering and most of them reproduced for the first time. A few of the artists published their sketches in book form, notably J. J. Bigsby in *The Shoe and Canoe*, and Anne Langton in her privately printed *The Story of Our Family* (1881). But much the larger number were found in the homes of their descendants, in local historical museums, or in the Public Archives at Ottawa and Toronto. A few are from the National Gallery, Ottawa, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the Sigmund Samuel Canadiana Gallery, Toronto.

With the exception of a few water-colours by military personnel, the paintings by Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, 1792–96, are the first representations of the provincial scene. While at times somewhat drab and unfinished in execution, they form an indispensable collection and are usually associated with her diary where small reproductions of most of them were printed in black and white by John Ross Robertson. The originals of most of them are now in the Archives of Ontario, along with copies of thirty-two others that I located in 1958 in the British Museum, London.

Apart from Mrs. Simcoe's work, we are most indebted to officers, usually of regiments of the British garrisons, for pictures of early scenes from Loyalist days to the eighteen-forties. They are the more valuable in that the artists were trained to be topographical painters and to give a detailed and almost photographic representation of what they saw. The most notable of this group of artists are Ensign James Peachey, Surgeon Edward Walsh, Lieutenant Sempronius Stretton, Captain Thomas Burrowes, Lieutenant Philip Bainbrigge, Colonel H. F. Ainslie, and Colonel James Pattison Cockburn. The originals of their works are to be found largely in the Public Archives of Canada, the Archives of Ontario, and the Sigmund Samuel Canadiana Gallery, Toronto.

Another important group, some of whom were similarly trained because of their vocation in life, were travellers to the British provinces in America. The most notable is W. H. Bartlett, but Henry du Vernet, W. N. Cresswell, and Captain Basil Hall (the last-named with the aid of the Camera Lucida) have left one or more paintings or sketches. Dr. J. J. Bigsby printed a number of his in the two volumes of *The Shoe and Canoe* (1850). Reproduced for the first time in this work is the full collection of sketches and paintings made in 1844, mainly on the sailing-ship *Cambridge* and in the Lake Simcoe region, by T. H. Ware, an English lawyer who was not favourably impressed with the crudities of backwoods conditions and returned home after a few months. In several respects his pictures are unique: (1) nowhere else in Britain or America have I found sketches of crew or passengers made by a traveller in the sailing-ship period; (2) they provide the chief early representations of the beginnings of settlement in the Orillia-Coldwater region; and (3) they provide the best representations of the exteriors of log shanties, and of log bridges and corduroy roads.

Those who stayed longer in the country and became residents include a considerable number of capable artists, several of whom had been influenced by or had taken lessons from such great English artists as Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Henry Raeburn, John Constable, J. M. W. Turner, Sir Edwin Henry Landseer, and Sir E. J. Poynter. In these volumes are reproduced paintings or sketches made during the nineteenth century by Charles Fothergill, Robert Whale, Paul Wickson, Anne Langton, Cornelius Krieghoff, Paul Kane, Arthur Cox, W. Cruickshank, William Armstrong, R. Baigent, Edward Caddy, Sir Frederick Verner,* Reginald Drayton, G. Ackerman, George H. Durrie, J. P. Downes, Susanna Moodie, Agnes Fitzgibbon,** Caroline Hayward, Henry W. Peterson, Frances Anne Hopkins, Charles Davy Brown, T. Workman, Fanny Palmer, William Pope, James Hamilton, A. M. Edmonds, Sarah Ann Carter, John J. Dalton, James Gray, John Burrows, Harriet Clench, Florence Rogers, George Heriot, Coke Smyth, C. H. Clark, John Howard, Vincent Clementi, M. A. Farrar, William Elliott, Chief Beaver, and John Clague.

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*Born in Trafalgar in 1836 and receiving his early education at the Guelph Grammar School, Verner lived for some years in Oakville. In 1859 he was among a group of Oakville young men who joined the British Legion and served under Garibaldi in the war of Italian liberation, an episode in world freedom that captured the imagination of many liberal-minded men and women of the day.

**Daughter of Mrs. Moodie and niece of Mrs. Traill, she painted by hand, 'with the help of two or three young ladies', the ten master designs and flower-decorated title-page in all of the 500 copies of Catharine Traill's *Canadian Wild Flowers* (1869)—a total of 16,500 flower paintings. Earlier she had made over 200 sketches from nature, finding it easier than using the flower paintings of the Reverend Vincent Clementi, also of Lakefield. Many further details and an outline of other publishing difficulties are given by Nick Nickels in 'Agnes Moodie: Flower Books at Any Cost', in an undated clipping from the *Peterborough Examiner*.

The works of a large number of these artists have been 'discovered' by the writer during travels in Ontario with that end in view; and they are reproduced for the first time either here or in my *Toronto Daily Star* series, 'Old Times in Ontario'. Apart from the history of farming and of early life in general, a major purpose in these volumes has been to provide for the first time an approach to a comprehensive collection of historical illustrations of early Ontario.

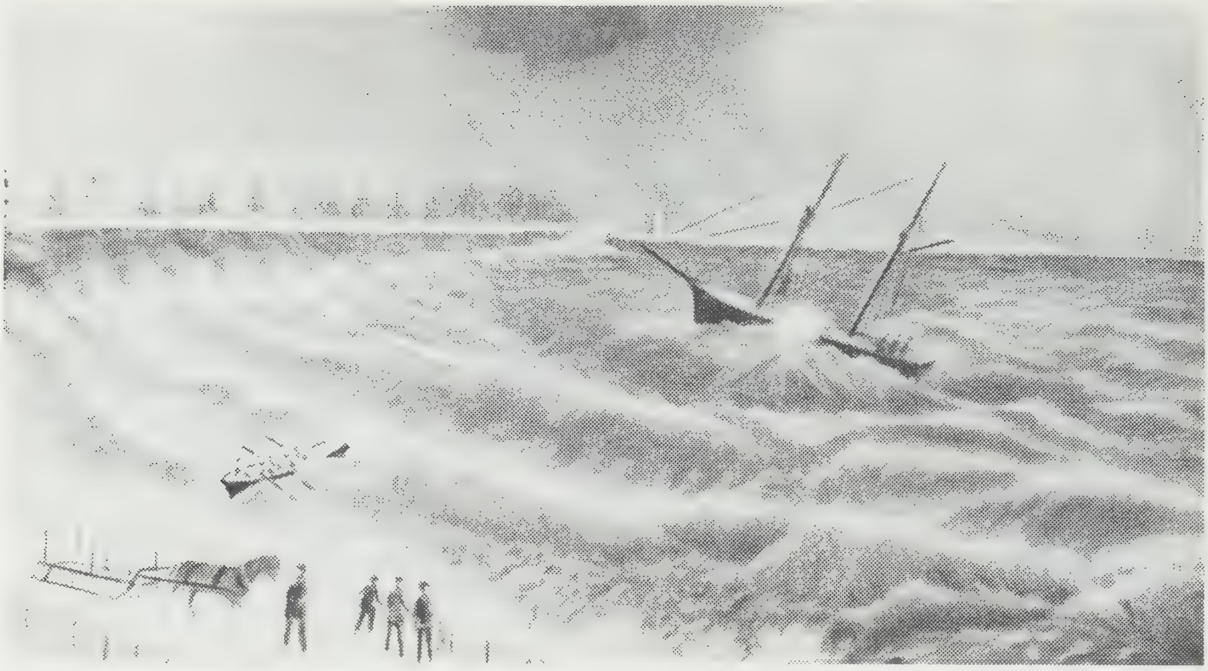
Later artists whose work is represented include Jack Martin, Robert Harris, J. C. H. Forster, A. Sherriff Scott, Arthur Heming, George Reid, C. H. J. Snider, Frank C. Taylor, Creigh Collins, Edith Macklin, E. C. Bigley, Alfred Hayward, W. E. Cantelon, Russell Taber, T. W. Maclean, C. W. Jefferys, J. E. Laughlin, Alice Pilant, Jerrine Kinton, R. R. Osgoode, B. Napier Simpson, Jr., and Harold McCrea.

The least that may be said of the galaxy of artists whose work is reproduced in these volumes is that it is most fortunate they were not of the abstract or impressionist school; for if they had been, their remarkable contribution to the appearance of things in our past would have been missing from our heritage, and, of course, nothing could have compensated for the loss. Even a combination of traditional and non-representational art would have distorted appearances so greatly that we could have derived no clear or accurate idea of scenes of the past.

Supplementing the work of artists is the woodcut, the steel engraving, the lithograph, and the various primitive attempts to combine them with early photography. As photography developed, and particularly when the printing of halftones had been invented by Leggo and others, the fine collections that many groups and individuals have made of early productions of the camera have been available to augment the work of artists.

Of great value too, and in need of copying by microfilm so that students of history can consult them conveniently, are some two thousand Tweedsmuir local histories of Canadian communities compiled by Women's Institutes. While they are uneven in content, most of them contain invaluable local records, including early photographs almost unique in the field of historical illustration.

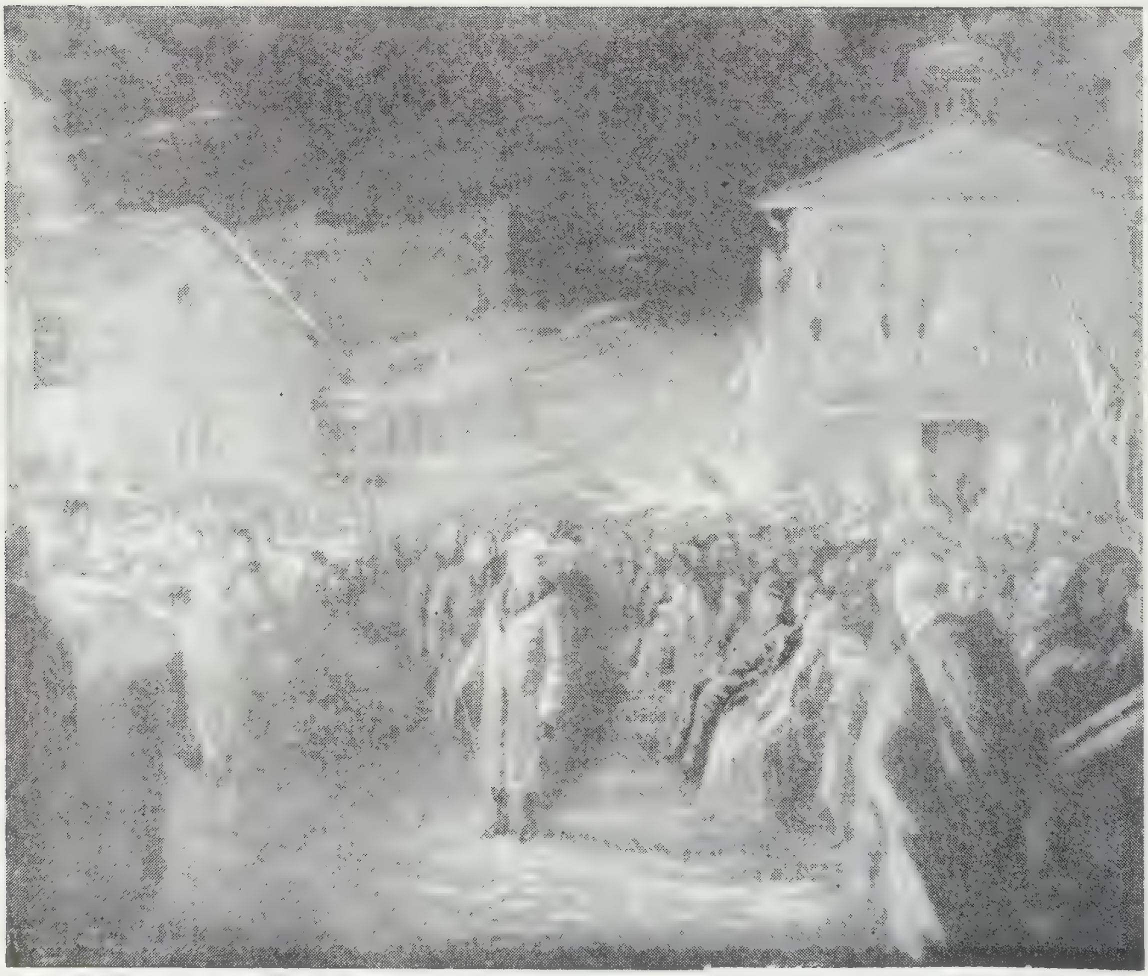
Originals of illustrations, photographs as well as sketches and paintings, occasionally disappear as a result of one or another of the hazards of life. Murals have been removed since I had



Water-colour by John Howard

THE RESCUE OF THE CREW OF THE *PACIFIC*, 1861

Thomas Tinning of Toronto was leader of the lifeboat crew in Humber Bay.



Ontario Parliament Buildings R. R. Osgoode

'OLD UNION JACK'

Sir John A. Macdonald addressing a night gathering during his last campaign. He was exceedingly proud of the title 'Old Union Jack'.

John Duncumb's *British Emigrant's Advocate*, 1837

'WINTER SCENE NEAR TORONTO'

This type of imaginative but colourful representation of the Canadian scene was long considered authentic in the Old Land.

Courtesy of the Langton family Anne Langton

PETERBOROUGH FROM WHITE'S TAVERN, 1830's

Anna Jameson

CANOE JOURNEY, 1837

The artist travelled from Manitoulin to Penetanguishene.

them photographed thirty years ago, and items in both public and private collections have similarly disappeared. Reproduced herewith is a picture which may have been 'lost', if not destroyed, for political reasons. It is 'Old Union Jack', an oil painting by R. R. Osgoode, which hung on the walls of the Ontario Parliament Buildings in 1933. When I had it photographed the Conservative administration of the Hon. George S. Henry was in power, but soon afterwards the Hon. Mitchell Hepburn, a Liberal, took over the government of Ontario. Those in charge of public property in the Buildings have no knowledge of the disappearance of the painting or of its present whereabouts. As it is of Sir John A. Macdonald, among the possibilities are that Mr. Henry removed it elsewhere because he admired it, or that Mr. Hepburn did so because he didn't.

In addition to the sources of illustrations already described, special mention should be made of three important groups of pictures which have been made available for this work. Permission to reproduce a series of nine excellent drawings of aspects of pioneering by Russell Taber has been granted by the International Nickel Company of Canada. Similarly a selection from the illustrations effectively drawn by T. W. Maclean for Merrill Denison's *Harvest Triumphant*, the official history of the Massey-Harris Company, has been made available by Massey-Ferguson Limited, providing a visual history of the development of farming from hand labour to machine that is not to be found anywhere else. Many of the best photographic illustrations in *The Pioneer Farmer and Backwoodsman* are from the notable collection compiled by the Conservation Authorities Branch of the Department of Lands and Forests, Ontario, during years of work remedying the destructive forces of carelessness and erosion and developing the energies and beauties of the province's river valleys.

The 450 illustrations in these volumes have been assembled, engraved, and arranged at great expenditure of both time and money, but the author believes that they immeasurably enrich the history of the growth and progress of nearly two centuries described in the text.

INDEX

Abandoned homes, I 256, II 267, 275, 281
Abbott, Francis, I 258-62
Abbott, Sir John, I 90n.
Abbott, Joseph, I 34n., 88, 90n., 131n., 213-4, 253n., 254, 336, 338-40, 341, 343, II 13, 19-21, 24-5, 38-9, 43-5, 68, 70, 71, 95-6, 98, 275, 277-314
Abdy, E. S., I 57n.
Abell, Helen, II 293
Ackerman, G., II 15
Act of Union, I 263n., II 199
Adair, William, II 204n., 206
Adams, Geoffrey, I 230n.
Adams, Jane, I 130n.
Adamson, Anthony, I 65n., II 13
Adelaide Tp., I 108, 295-6
Adjala Tp., I 200
Affleck, Robert, I 341
Agricultural Association of Upper Canada, II 136 *et seq.*
Agricultural Societies, II 129-46
Agriculture, Department of, II 104, 286-7
Ahrens, Jacob, II 259
Ahrens Pottery, II 259
Ainslie, H. F., I 45, 327
Albertson, Jacob, I 202
Albion Hotel, Cobourg, II 349
Aldborough Tp., II 70
Aldgeo's Tavern, Caradoc, I 128, 178
Alexander, Sir James, I 57, 78, 233-4, 238, 252, II 68n., 133-4
Alexandria, II 218
Algoma District, II 117n., 281
Algonkin Indians, I 3
Algonquin Park, I 3
Allan, William, I 289
Allen, Anthony, I 156-7
Allen, Rev.——, I 165-6
Allumette Island, I 3
Almonte, I 105, 168, II 273
Amalgamation of farm implement makers, II 149n.
American Civil War, I 166, 254, II 199
American Patriot raiders, I 221
'American squatters', I 303-6
American Thrasher, II 161
Amherstburg, I 284
Ancaster, I 3, 171
Anderson, Thomas, I 28
Anderson, William, I 94
Anderson's Trading-Post, I 339
Andrews, G. H., I 317
Angus, Andrew, II 272
Apple-paring bee, II 238
Apple recipes, II 238
Apsley, II 207n.
Archaic customs and beliefs, *see especially* I 201n.
Armadale, I 55
Armstrong, Peter, I 308
Arnold, Matthew, I 165n.
Asphodel Tp., I 136n., II 38
Atkins' Self-Raking Reaper, II 58

Back, Sir George, I 236
Backhouse, John, II 90
Bagpipers, prominence of, I 233-4
Baigent, R., II 225
Bailieboro, I 181
Bainbrigge, Philip, I 40, 273, II 69, 258, 332
Baldoon settlement, I 234n.
Baldwin, W. W., I 289
Ball Mower, II 161
Balsam Lake region, I 280
Bancroft Hotel, I 165
Bands, I 154-5, 163, 213
'Banished Lord', I 255-8
Bank of Upper Canada, I 93
Bannerman, Flora, I 211
Bannerman, John, I 211
Barrie, II 244
Bartlett, W. H., I 42, 44, 67, 125, 276, 315, II 320
Bathtubs, introduction of, II 256
Bathurst Courier, I 93
Batten, Richard, I 177
Batten family, I 337
Bawbell, Henry, II 38
Bay of Quinte settlers, I 16 *et seq.*, II 54
Beam, Jacob, I 212
Beamsville, I 237
Beasley, Richard, II 325
Beason, William, I 60
Beaven, James, I 112, II 26-7
Beaverton, I 201
Beebe, James, I 154 n.
Bees and bee-keeping, II 111-2
Beldam, David, II 164
Belfountain, II 118
Bell, Alexander Graham, I 111
Bell, Patrick, II 148
Bell's Reaper, II 148, 159

Bell, William, I 121, 246, 318, II 29, 43, 85, 110
Belleville (*also* Singleton's Creek, Meyer's Creek), II 62n., 79, 344
Benevolent societies, I 162-3
Bennett, Smith, II 231
Bennett, ——, I 165
Bentinck Tp., I 342
Benwell, Fred, II 120
Berczy, William, I 108
Berners, Lord, I 54n.
Bethany, II 293-4
Bethune, James Gray, I 266
Betts, Cyrus, I 202
Beverly Tp., II 52, 68
Bexley, Baron, I 280
Bexley Tp., I 70n.
Biddulph Tp., I 240, II 180n.
Bidport Tp., II 91, 105, 277
Bigley, E. C., I 193
Bigsby, J. J., I 51, 122, 230, 255-8, 300
Birchall, Reginald, II 120
Bird, Isabella, II 63
Birds, I 268-70, II 275
Birdsall, Richard, I 136n.
Birdsall, Samuel, II 212n.
Bishop, Isabella, I 85
Black, Alex., II 138n.
Black, Miss, II 326
Blacksmith shop, Kirby, I 89
Blenheim Tp., I 266
Bloomer, Amelia, I 130n.
Bloor, Joseph, II 225
Bloor's Brewery, Toronto, II 225
Blueberries, importance of, I 5, 275
Blume, Helmut, I 209n.
Board-cutting, II 169-70
Bobcaygeon, I 93, 122, 286, II 102
Bogie, David, I 154
Bolles, John, II 181
Boskung district, I 100, 115n., 158, II 117
Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, II 179n., 185n.
Boulton, Mrs. D'Arcy, II 138
Boulton family, I 272n.
Bowmanville, II 39
Boyd, Mossom, II 102-4
Brampton, II 226
Brantford district, I 23, 53, 111, 266-8, II 12, 114, 168, 354
Bread-baking, II 220-3
Brewing beer, II 225-6
Breen, Mary, II 274
Breen, Rose, II 274
Bridgenorth, I 286
British American Cultivator, I 60, II 86
Brock, Robert, II 118
Brockville, I 43, 121-2
Brown, Charles Davy, I 61, 181, II 6
Brown, Hon. George, II 36n.
Brown, J. B., I 63, 208
Brown, Robert, II 102
Brown, William (farmer), II 102
Brown, William (author), I 223n., 282
Browning, Robert, I 165n.
Bruce County, I 238, II 117, 118
Bryson's Landing, I 255n.
Buchanan, A. C., I 50n., 297-8
Buchanan, John, I 154-6
Buck, Charles S., II 24n.
Buck's Hotel, Minden, I 159-60
Buckeye Mower, II 166
Buckingham, J. S., I 125
Bull, William Perkins, I 106n., 109, 148n., II 236n.
Bullock, Edward, I 135
Burford, I 3
Burleigh Falls, II 228
Burleigh Tp., I 63n., 275, II 88, 228
Burleigh Colonization Road, I 63n.
Burnet, F., II 152
Burnham, A. J., II 144
Burnham, Zacheus, I 64, II 93
Burnham family, II 75
Burns, Robert, influence of, I 167-9, 186-9
Burns' blacksmith shop, Cobourg, II 256
Burrell Reaper, II 156
Burritt, Stephen, I 22-3
Burrows, John, I 305
Burrowes, Thomas, I 97, II 79, 218, 348
Burson, Jemima, I 202
Butler's Rangers, I 14
Butter-making, II 249-50

Caddy, Edward, I 280
Caledon Tp., II 288n.
Camden East, II 276
Cameron, Donald, I 115
Cameron, Duncan, I 289
Campbell, Kenneth, I 115
Campbell, Wilfred, I 186n.
Campbell's Inn, Talbot Road, I 89
Campbell's Tavern, Matilda, I 128
Campbellton, I 71
Canada Company, I 219, 233, 265, 272, 276, 283, 299, 309, II 47, 72n., 142, 266
Canada Farmer, I 304, 319, II 98-9, 146, 175, 198, 282
Canadian Illustrated News, I 36, 84, 155, 167, 294, II 83, 110-1, 123, 136, 138, 141, 142
Canadian Journal, II 139
Canadian Pacific Railway, II 117n., 138, 264
Canadian West, II 128n., 219; emigration from Ontario to, II 74n., 288
Candle-making, II 244-8
Canniff, William, I 192
Canning fruit, II 295
Cannington, II 67
Cant, Adam, II 157
Cant's Root Cutter, II 157
Cantelon, W. E., I 199, II 230

Index

Capreol, Mrs., II 138
Capron, 'King', I 247n.
Caradoc, I 178
Card, L., II 38
Carding wool, II 184
Carleton, Sir Guy, I 11, 230n.
Carleton Place, II 21
Carman, Bliss, I 186n.
Carnarvon, I 156
Carpenter's Inn, Cobourg, I 124
Carr, Thomas, II 277-9
Carson, Jo, I 205n.
Carter J. S., II 136
Carter, Sarah Ann, I 331, II 107
Carruthers, John, I 198, II 51
Cataract, II 288n., 289
Cattle sale, Toronto, II 83
'Cavan Blazers', I 145n., 250
Cavan Tp., I 145n., 250, II 134, 172
Cayuga Cheese Factory, II 254
Cedar Lake, I 7
Celtic Society, I 166
Champlain, Samuel de, I 3
Chapman family, II 208-9
Charcoal-burning, II 206-7
Charlotteville Tp., I 140
Chatham district, I 184, 240, II 69, 74n., 332
Chaucer, Geoffrey, I 145n.
Cheesemaking, II 250-5
Chemong floating bridge, I 114
Cherry, Abner, I 127-8
Cherry's Inn, Toronto, I 127
Chief Beaver, II 289
Child's (Mrs.) *Frugal Housewife*, II 222
Chisholm Mill, Oakville, II 322
Choate, Nathan, I 191n., II 141
Choate family, II 75
Chopping bee, I 337
Christian Guardian, I 104, 197n.
Christie, A. J., I 303, 312
Chrysler family, II 46
Churches, *see* Religion
Cider-making, II 233-4
Cider press, Humber River, II 239
Clague, Elizabeth, I 98-9
Clague John, I 98-9, 100
Clark, C. H., II frontispiece
Clark, William, I 254
Clarke Tp., II 156
Clearing land, methods of, I 303-43
Clementi, Vincent, I 227, II 119-20
Clench, E. C., II 144
Clench, Harriet, II 144
Clifford, Robert, I 63n.
Clifton Hotel, Niagara Falls, I 120-1
Climie, John, I 42, 46-7
Clothes-making, II 188
Clothes of skins, II 177
Cobbett, William, II 342n.
Cobourg district, I 3, 64, 76, 90n., 160, 164, 169, 200, 284, 286, II 39, 93, 138n., 149, 160, 166, 257-8
Cobourg Horticultural Society, II 143-5
Cobourg Star, II 119, 266
Cobourg and Peterborough Railroad, II 138n.
Cockburn, James Pattison, I frontispiece, 127, 236, 273, 305, II 231, 254, 317, 350
Cock-fighting, I 148n., II 325
Coffee, substitutes for, I 75, II 237
Coke, E. T., I 120-1, 230, 250-1
Colborne, Sir John, I 171
Colborne Tp., I 74, 80, 154
Colchester Tp., I 240
Coldwater, I 4, 79, 114, 265, II 264
Cole, Zack, II 117
Coleridge, Samuel T., I 165n.
Colgate, William, I 106n.
Collingwood, I 263, II 117
Collins, Creigh, I 27, 139, II 180
Colonisation roads, II 117, 122
Colt, Nelson, II 152
Confederation, I 263n.
Conant, Thomas, II 167
Cook, Mrs., II 117
Cooke & de Courtney Winery, II 240
Cooper, Nathaniel, II 140
Cooper, William, I 171
Cooper's Toronto Coffee House, I 289
Cooper shop, II 175
Copleston, Mrs. Edward, I 98, 228, 263-5, 279, 313, II 58-9, 108, 160-1, 164, 267-8
Corduroy roads, I 333
Corkery, Michael, I 231
Cornwall, I 13, 171
Coteau du Lac, I 17, 41
Couchiching, Lake, II 268
County Agricultural Representatives, II, 287
Coventry, George, II 143
Cowan, Helen I., I 41n.
Cox, Arthur, I 168
Cox's Dam, I 227
Craick, W. A., II 62
Cranberries, wild, II 239
Craven, Linwood, II 59
Credit River district, I 284, II 288n.
Creemore, II 265
Creighton, Donald, I 102n.
Cresswell, W. N., I 281
Crew's Tavern, Yonge Street, I 128
Crimean War, II 342-3
Croil, James, II 280
'Cromaboo', I 150, 152
Cross, John, II 110
Cross-cut saw, 318-20
Cruickshank, W., II 83, 111, 135
Culver, Jabez, I 201
Culver, John, II 3n.
Culver, Miriam, II 3n.
Curling, I 147
Currency, I 91 *et seq.*
Dalhousie Tp., I 42, 184, 274-5, II 273-4

Dalton, John J., I 331
Dalton, William, II 70
Dalton, Winifred, II 107
Daniel, Alexander, I 140
Darling, David (Eady Corners), II 264
Darling, Mrs. David (Trafalgar), I 137-8
Darling, W. S., I 178n., 277, 279, 321-2, 323
Darlington Mills (Bowmanville), II 218
Darlington Tp., I 48, II 156
Daubeny, Charles, I 125, 136n.
Davey, Lloyd, II 347
Davies, Blodwen, I 160-1, 224n.
Davis, Asa, II 54
Davis, F. R., II 178
Davis, Robert, I 153n.
Dayton, Mrs., I 23
De Brosse, Chevalier and Madame, I 258n.
DelaFosse, Fred, I 312, II 21, 39, 56, 91, 120 *et seq.*, 266n.
De la Roche, Mazo, I 204n.
Delhi, II 9
Delivery Day (for machines), II 164, 165
Demorestville Canning Factory, II 109n.
Denison, Merrill, II 154
Detroit region, I 8-10, 120, 218n., 265
De Vere, Stephen E., I 42n.
Dickens, Charles, I 165n., 216
Dickson, Mrs. C. W., II 347
Dickson, William, II 49
Diefenbaker, Rt. Hon. John, I 211
Distilling whiskey, II 225-6
Dittrick, James, I 24-5, 28
Dixon, James, I 73, II 42
Dixon, William, I 194
Doan's schoolhouse, I 172-3
Dobbie, James, I 341, II 272
Dominion Experimental Farm, II 156n.
Dominion Illustrated, I 40, II 89
Don Valley, II 108, 112n.
Donly, Eva Brook, II 230
Doolittle, Hiram, I 247
Dorland, A. G., I 202n.
Dorset, II 117
Doubleday, Eliza, I 206n.
Doubleday, Frances, I 206n.
Douglas, George M., I 255n., II 22, 263
Douro Tp., I 335
Downes, J. P., I 16, 181
Downie Tp., I 52, II 280
D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, I 149
Drayton, Reginald, I 105, 227, 339, II 283
Drew, Benjamin, I 240n.
Drinks, native, II 226
Driving-shed, II 272
Dufferin, Lord, I 237
Dufferin County, II 118, 145n., 288n.
Dumfries Tp., I 3, 333, II 49, 267
Dummer Tp., I 98-9, 177, 191, 207, 247n., 255n., 266, 297-8, 337
Dundas, II 65, 161
Dundas County, I 237, II 161
Dundurn Castle, Hamilton, II 325
Dunham, Mabel, I 238, II 36n.
Dunlop, William, I 64, 85, 156, 172n., 184, 190, 195, 233, 265, 325, 327, II 36, 47, 112n., 338
Dunlop, W. J., I 173n.
Dunn, Misses, I 176
Durand, George, I 9
Durham County, II 154
Durham's *Report*, I 112n., 228
Durrie, George H., II 217
Dutcher Plow, II 149
Dyeing, II 185-6

Eady Corners, II 264
Eastwood, I 70
Edgeworth, Maria, I 174
Edmonds, A. M., I 103
Egremont, Earl of, I 296
Eldon Tp., II 51
Elgin County, I 232-3, II 93
Elliott, William, I 175
Elliott, Miss, II 138
Ellis, Isabella, I 111
Ellis, Wallace, I 111
Elmira, I 160
Elmsley Tp., I 292
Elora, I 188
Elstone, William, II 88
Embroidery, II 190, 191
Emerson, Ralph W., I 216n.
'Emigrant Lady', I 191, II 124
Emigration 'fever', II 288
Emigration propaganda, I 167, II 264
Emily Tp., I 247n., 250
Emotional thinking, I 214n.
'English Farmer', I 121, 220, 268-70, II 77
Erin, I 152n.
Erindale (*early* Springfield), I 119, 194n., 284, II 7, 268-9, 290
Ermatinger, C. O., II 6n.
Esquesing Tp., I 232
Essa Tp., I 200
Essex County, I 3, 137, 184
Evans, Francis, II 14
'Ex-Settler', I 52, 87, 91, 92, 93, 220, 265, 270, 272, 274, 276, 279, 283, 318, 329-31, II 3-5, 17-8, 36, 41, 43-4, 62, 63, 76-7, 78, 92, 94-5, 105, 262-3, 266
Eyre, Jane, I 90n.
Eyre, Thomas, II 102

Failure in settlement, II 262-85
Fairley, Margaret, I 294n.
Fairs and exhibitions, II 129-46; selling stock at, II 134
'Family Compact', I 20, 22n., 153n., 170-1, 205, 219, 226, 233, 272n., 276, 279n.

'Farm and Fireside', II 294
Farm improvements, II 290 *et seq.*
Farmers' associations, II 286-8
Farmers' picnics, II 146
Farrar, M. A., I 339, II 125
Fawcett, Millicent, I 130n.
Fenelon Falls, I 115n., 140, 142, 193, 226
Fenian raids, I 254-5
Fenton, Robert, I 96
Fergus, I 232, II 36, 269, 341
Fergusson, Adam, I 128, 138, 252, 328, II 35-7, 100, 148, 269
Fidget, Prudence, I 247
Fidler, Isaac, I 98, 102, 176n., 197, 219, 220, 222, 242, 300, 302, II 80-1, 263n.
Field Trials of farm machinery, II 163
Finch's Inn, Willowdale, I 128
Fire Brigades, I 166-7
Fisher, James, II 178
Fisher's Mill, II 65
Fishing, II 228
Fish recipes, II 227-9
Fitzgibbon, Agnes, I 59, 322, II 370n.
Flax-growing, II 195-7
Fleming, Sir Sandford, II 138
Flour-milling, II 215-9
Flowers, I 58-60, 136-7, 268, 321-4
Foljambe, Joseph, II 149
Football, I 146, 148
Foran, Michael, II 294-5
Forster, J. C. H., I 111
Forster, Thomas, I 93n., II 7n.
Forster, W., II 265
Forster, Mrs., I 179
Fort Frontenac, I 8
Fothergill, Charles, I 7, 105, 192, 239, 242n.
Fotheringham, David, I 182-3
Foulds, James, I 335
Fowke, Edith, I 209n.
Fowlds, Henry, II 125
Fowler, Thomas, I 62-3, 124, 258-62, II 49, 92, 113
Fox, Reynard, I 247
Freeland's Soap Factory, Toronto, II 247
French agriculture, II 60
Frome, emigration from, I 297-8
Frontenac County, II 290
Frost, Hon. Leslie M., II 126n.
Froude, James A., I 243n.
Fruits, preserving of, II 238-9, 295
Fuller, James, I 313
Fulling cloth, II 187
Furniture-making, II 171-3

Galbraith, John K., I 233n.
Gallic Stripper, II 147-8
Galt, John, I 233
Galt, I 232, 237, II 35
Game, dressing of, II 229, 232
Gananoque, I 23-4
Garbraid, I 156
Garland, M. A., I 209n.
Geikie, John, I 82, 83, II 91, 96, 105, 106, 277
Gelatine-making, II 243
Genesee Farmer, I 217, II 146
Gibbon, John M., I 228n.
Gifford, Charles, I 221-2, 295, II 342-58
Gilbert and Sullivan operas, I 149
Gillard, George, II 260
Gillard blacksmith shop, II 260
Ginseng culture, II 114
Gleason, T. C., II 157
Gleason's Tanning Mill, II 157
Glengarry County, I 18, 218n., 232, 310, 312, II 89
Glengarry cheese factory, II 89
Goderich district, I 156, 265, 281, 283
Gordon farms, Yonge Street, II 140
Gore, Arabella, II 62n.
Gore Grist Mills, II 65
Gore's Landing, II 266n.
Gore Bay Fair, II 145
Gore Bay mail stage, I 116
Gorman, Dan, I 38
Gould, Joseph, II 52, 93n.
Gourlay, Robert, I 22n., 52n., 146, 228-9, 279n., 313-4, II 34, 90, 270
Grafton, I 197, II 347
Grand River valley, I 3, II 50, 97
Grand Trunk Railway, I 265
Grants of land, *see* York, early land grants at
Grass, Michael, I 16
Grave of Thomas Carr, II 279
Grave of George A. Hill, I 207
Gray, James, I 43
Gray, Leslie R., I 202n.
Greasing wool, II 183-4
Grece, Charles F., I 290-1, II 106, 108
Greeley, Susan, I 24, 26
Green, Andrew, I 156
Green, Anson, I 212n.
Green, G. H., I 74, 80, 154-7
Grenville, L. C., II 20n.
Grey County, II 118
Gribben, James, II 12
Gros Cap, Lake Superior, I 236
Guelph, I 54n., 92n., 104n., 237, II 142
Guillet, John, I 253n.
Gwillimbury Tp., I 57

Haight, Canniff, I 20, 142
Haldimand County, I 238
Haldimand Tp., I 24
Half-pay officers, *see especially* I 218n., II 342
Haliburton, T. C., I 214, 252n., II 47n.
Haliburton region, I 98-9, 115n., 141, 156, 159-60, 214, II 74, 88, 117-8, 126, 165, 276
Haliburton County Echo, I 104n., 115n.

Hall, Basil, I 51, 53, 192n.
Hallowe'en, I 237n.
Hallowell (Picton), II 57n.
Halton County, I 85, II 107
Hamilton, George, II 90
Hamilton, Thomas, II 254, 279
Hamilton, Lt.-Col., I 8n.
Hamilton, I 149, 164-5, 240, II 141, 192
Hamilton Association, I 149, 164-5
Hamilton Central Fair, II 141
Hamilton Tp., II 42, 73, 101-4, 134, 161, 232n.
Hamilton Tp. Agricultural Society, II 101-2
Hampton, II 64
Hare family, II 161n.
Harness-making, II 181-2
Harness shop, II 178
Harper's Weekly, II 181
Harris, Amelia, I 25
Harris, Robert, I 175, 224n.
Harris Binder, II 163
Harris trading-post, Rice Lake, I 192
Harrison, Mrs. John, I 156
Hartley, Florence, II 192n.
Hastings, Lady Flora, II 125
Hastings (*early* Crooks' Rapids), II 125, 232n.
Hastings County, II 95n.
Hatt family, II 161n.
Hawkesbury, II 20
Hay scales receipt, II 66
Haydon, Andrew, I 86
Haysville, I 181
Hayward, Alfred, I 324
Hayward, Caroline, I 287
Hazlitt, William, I 165n., 241n.
Heacock, Seth, I 313
Head, Sir Edmund, II 325
Head, Lady, II 325
Head, Misses, II 325
Head, Sir Francis, I 205n.
Head, Sir Francis Bond, I 66, 205n., II 278
Head, Sir George, I 145
Head family (Dundas), II 161n.
Helliwell, William, I 60
Helm, John, II 160
Heming, Arthur, I 19
Hemp-growing, II 194-5
Hennepin, Louis, I 8
Henry, George, I 238
Henry, Hon. George S., II 374
Hepburn, Hon. Mitchell, II 374
Herbert, H. W., II 97-8
Herbicides, II 287
Herchmer, Jacob, II 114
Heriot, George, II 345
'Hermit of Niagara', I 258-62
'Hermit of Savard', I 258
Hewitt, Mrs. James, I 98
Hiawatha village, I 192, 339
Hibbert Tp., II 90
Hickey, William, I 100n., 328
Higgins, W. H., II 93n.
Hill, George A., I 38, 76, 207, 229-30, 249n., 255-6, 265n., 266, 282, 320-1, 329n., II 11, 81
Hill Plow, II 149
Hilts, Joseph, I 192
Hinck home, Newburgh, II 276
'Hired man', the, I 244-5, II 59
Hodgins, J. G., I 173
Hog-killing, II 94, 241
Hog's Back Rapids, I 305
Holland Landing, II 27
Holliday, Robert C., I 78
Holt's Hotel, Aylmer, I 125
Homespun clothing, II 188
Hood, Charles, II 127-8
Hoodless, Adelaide, II 146, 288n.
Hoople, Carrie M., I 200
Hopkins, Frances, I 21
Horn-book, teaching by, I 173
Horse-car street railways, I 133
Horse Hay-Stacker, II 175
Horse-Power, the, II 155, 165, 218
Horse-Rake, II 160
Horticulturists, II 107-10
Howard, John, II 372
Howe, John, II 279
Howells, Emily, I 218n.
Howison, John, I 22, 100-1, 106, 120, 125, 174, 220n., 242, 300, 310, 326n., 328, II 49, 112
Howard, John, I 32n.
Huguenot settlers, I 230n.
Hull Tp., II 46n., 179, 257
Humphrey, Capt., II 212n.
'Hungry Year', I 18, 20
Hunter, Isaac, II 117
Hunter, William, II 172
Hunting bee, II 71-2
Huntsville, II 127
Hurd, Aaron, I 198
Hurd, Abner, I 198
Huron County, II 180n.
Huron Indians, I 5-6
'Huron Tract', I 154-6, 219, 299, 309, II 47, 72, 117, 119, 266
Hussey, Obed, II 148
Hussey Reaper, II 148-9, 157, 159

Illustrated London News, I 30, 31, 37, II 58
Improved homes, II 282
Inches, James, I 326
Indian agriculture, I 3-8
Indian influence, I 218n.
Indian ponies, Brantford, I 115
Innisfil Tp., I 200, 310
Islington, II 130
Iron Bridge, I 281
Iroquois Indians, I 6
Irving, Washington, I 165n.

Index

Jameson, Anna, I 75, 89, 135-7, 174-6, 223, 252, 266-9, 282, 318, 329, II 100-1, 116, 268-9, 352, 353, 373
Jarvis family, I 106n.
Jefferys, C. W., II 213
Johnson, George, I 218n.
Johnson, John, I 331
Johnson, Sir John, I 230n.
Johnson, Pauline, I 323, 186n., II 72-3
Johnson, Samuel, II 42
Johnson's Inn, Barrie, II 244
Johnstone, Walter, I 125-6
Jones, Alpheus, I 66, II 13n.
Jones, Augustus, I 192, 224
Jones, Jonas, I 272n.
Jones, Peter, I 5, 192, 224
Jones, R. L., I 245n.
Jones, Samuel, II 54, 62
Jordan family, I 142
Journal of a Wanderer, I 47, 78, 143, 244
Junction House, Cataract, II 289

Kane, Paul, I 109, II 138, 144
Kawartha Lakes, I 225-7, 265, 280, 286n., 314
Keeler's Tavern, Colborne, I 127
Keene, II 277, 279
Kelly's cod-liver oil, II 138
Kelso, II 205
Kemp, Mrs., II 294
Kennedy, President J. F., I 141n.
Kennedy, Tam, I 253
Kennedy, Tom, II 287n.
Kerr, Lord Mark, II 143
Kerr family, I 106n.
Ketcheson, F. G., I 38n., 49n.
Ketchum, Jesse, I 194, II 181
Ketchum's Tannery, II 181
Ketchum Mower, II 161
Kettle Creek, I 108
Kincardine Tp., II 60
King Tp., I 313
King's Royal Regiment, I 14
Kingston, W. H. G., II 108-9
Kingston district, I 16-7, 46, 184, 236, II 133-4
Kingston Bridge, II 319
Kingston Agricultural Society, emblem of, II 129
Kingston Tp., II 290
Kingston-York Road, 1830, I frontispiece
Kinton, Jerrine, II 196
Kirby, William, I 20
Kirby, I 89
Kirkconnell, Watson, I 115n., I 279n., II 289
Kitchen, Jo, II 16n.
Kitchener (*formerly* Berlin), I 237, 271
Knitting, II 190
Konorowski, Leon, I 221n.
Krieghoff, Cornelius, I 45

Lac des Chats, I 275-6
Lac Seul, I 327
Lachine Rapids, II 318
Lacy, Bridget, I 36-8
Lahontan, I 5
Lakefield district, II 21, 113, 120-1, 263
Lake Simcoe region, I 33, 93, 110, 136n., 226, 280, 283, 310, 333, II 21, 22, 264
Lamb, Charles, I 165n.
Lamond, Robert, I 290, 318, II 106
Lampman, Archibald, I 186n.
Lanark County, I 86, 184, 219, 231-2, 274-5, 290, 306-8, 318, 341, II 272
Land, Robert, I 23
Land grants, *see* York, early grants of land at
Landseer, Sir Edwin H., I 181
Lang, Arthur, I 275, II 273
Langstaff, John, II 141
Langton, Anne, I 83, 140, 142, 186, 226, II 76, 115, 245, 271, 373
Langton, John, I 51, 67, 69n., 77, 83, 96, 122, 192, 196, 221, 225-6, II 221, 229, 267, 271
Lard-making, II 243
La Salle, René-Robert, I 8
Laughlin, J. E., II 189
Laurel, II 145n.
La Vallée's Tavern, I 120
Leather-tanning, II 177-9
Lefroy, I 98
Leggitt, Percy, I 258
Leslie, George, II 108
Leslie, Mary, I 152n.
Lett, William P., I 123, II 132
Leys, Mr. and Mrs. J. F., I 105
Libraries, private, I 184
Libraries, public, I 164
Libraries, Scottish influence upon, I 184
Lickley, James, II 86-8
Lime-burning, II 204-6
Lincoln County, I 14, 238
Lindley, David, I 18
Lindsay, Alex., I 254
Lindsay, John, I 254
Lindsay (*early* Purdy's Mills), II 125, 126
Linen-making, II 197-9
Linton, J. J. E., II 10
Literary Garland, I 185
Little Current, II 178
Little York, I 157
Livingstone, John, II 164
Location ticket, I 292
Logan, James, I 225, 312, 335, II 57-8, 96
London district, I 52n., 103, 229, 240, 253, 283, 327, II 206, 331
Long Point district, I 3, 25, 140, 237, 247n., 253n., 283, 308, II 3n., 30-1, 45, 198

Long Sault Rapids, II 320
Loughborough Tp., I 97
Lovesick Lake, II 228
Lowe, F. H. H., II 144
Lowell Tannery, Newtonbrook, II 179
'Lower orders', rise of, II 278 *et seq.*
Lucan, II 180n.
Lumbering, I 278, 314-8
Lyon's Exchange Hotel, Bytown, I 123

Mabee, Frederick, I 208
McCormick, Cyrus, II 148
McCormick Reaper, II 148-9
McCracken, William, I 55
McCracken's Landing, I 55
McCrea, Amos, II 35
McCrea, Harold, II 189
McCrea, J. M., I 342
McCrea, ——, I 140
M'Donald, John (author), I 191, 286-7
McDonald, John (Kincardine), II 60
Macdonald, Sir John A., I 102n., 233, 250n., II 15, 372, 374
Macdonald, J. B., II 211
Macdonald Foundry, Tiverton, II 211
Macdonald, Hon. John S., II 67
McDonald, R., II 6
McDonald, Miss, I 99
Macdonald family, I 218n.
McGee, Thomas D'Arcy, I 219n., 230n.
McGillivray Tp., II 59
McGinnis Lake, I 4
McGowan's Mill, Saugeen, II 260
McIntosh, Allen, II 90
Mackay, Isabel Ecclestone, I 186n.
McKay, Mr. and Mrs., II 31
McKellar, Peter, II 216
Mackenzie, Alexander, I 233
McKenzie, Tait, I 105
Mackenzie, W. L., I 22, 233
McKinnon, Archibald, I 39
Macklin, Edith, I 200
McKyes, Daniel, II 157, 160
McLachlan, Alexander, I 168-9, 187, 189, 268, 294n.
MacLaren, A. F., II 90
Maclean, T. W., II 31, 53, 55, 61, 150, 151, 155, 158, 159, 162, 163
McLelland, John, II 273-4
McLelland, Mrs. John, II 273-4
McLeod, Norman, I 234n.
McLeod, Capt., I 282
McMann, Mrs., I 254
McMichael, Mrs. Edward, I 102
McMichael, Mary, I 253n.
MacNab, Sir Allan, II 325
McNab, *The*, I 233-5, II 265-6
McNab Tp., I 103
Macnally, Miss, I 178
McPherson, Peter, I 292
Macqueen, Thomas, II 29
MacRae, Marion, I 65n.
Mactaggart, John, I 69 n., 74n., 75n., 76-7, 95-6, 124n., 136n., 146, 208n., 220n., 231, 232n., 285n., 306-8, 309, II 77n., 81n., 93n., 199n.
Magrath, James, I 37, 284-5, II 268-9, 275
Magrath, Thomas, I 63, 205, II 7, 23, 100, 268-9, 275
Maitland, Sir Peregrine, II 133
Malpeque, P.E.I., I 126
Manitoulin Island, I 196, 316, II 145
Manning, William, II 148
Manny, John P., II 155
Manny's Reaper, II 155-6
Maple Grove, II 12
Maple sugar industry, I 5, 7, II 200-4
Margarine, coloured, II 286
Marguerat, Louis, I 259
Markham Tp., I 39, 108, 196, 237, II 60
Marmora Iron Works, I 158
Marryat, Helen, II 125
Marsh, Charles W., II 162
Marsh, Robert, II 162
Marsh, William, II 162
Marsh Harvester, II 162, 166
Marsh, 'Elder', I 198
Martin, David, II 68
Martin, Jack, I 109
Martin, Capt., II 122 *et seq.*
Martineau, Harriet, I 81
Mason, George, II 117
Mason, Thomas, I 98-9, 115n.
Mason, Mrs. Thomas, I 98-9
Masonic Lodge, I 152n., 166
Massey, Daniel, II 153 *et seq.*
Massey, Hart, II 154 *et seq.*, 174
Massey, Vincent, II 154n.
Massey Harvester, II 158
Massey Light Binder, II 151
Massey-Ferguson Ltd., II 154n.
Massey-Harris Ltd., II 150, 154n., 156, 157
Matheson, William, II 180n.
Mathews, Hazel, II 111n.
Matilda Tp., I 128
Maurer, L., II 135
Mayerhoffer, Vincentius, I 196
Meaford district, II 117
Meat-grinder, II 242
Mechanics' Institute, I 164
Medonte Tp., I 335n., II 6
Melancthon Swamp, II 288n.
Melius, ——, II 122
Merit cards, use in schools, I 179
Merrickville, I 273
Meyers, John W., II 62n.
Mickle family, I 36n., 54n., 222n., 320n.
Middlesex County, I 175
Middleton Tp., II 36
Miles' Inn, York, I 190
Militia parades, I 153; riot at, II 133
Milking-time, II 295

Mill of Kintail, I 105
Miller, George, II 140
Miller, John, II 140
Mills, Alan, I 209n.
Minden, I 115n., 156, 159, II 86
Minden Echo, I 115n.
Mississaga Indians, II 117
Mississippi River (Ontario), II 48
Mitchell, Margaret, II 71n.
Mohawk Indians, II 97, 200
Moira River district, I 71, II 203
Molson, John, I 110
Monck, Viscount and Lady, I 21
Montgomery's Commercial House, Islington, II 66
Moodie, J. W. D., I 241
Moodie, Susanna, I 14, 58, 82, 95n., 136, 158, 185-6, 240-1, 322, 336, II 11, 57, 237
Moore, C. C., I 216n.
Moore, Jeremiah, I 18
Moore, Sir John, I 129, II 352
Moore, Joseph, I 18
Moore, Thomas, I 230n.
Moore, Dr. Thomas, I 250n.
Morris, Alexander, II 133
Morris, Elizabeth, I 80
Morris, John, I 80, 156
Morrow, Andy, I 89
Morrow's blacksmith shop, I 89
Morrow, W. A., I 166
Mortgages, I 299, II 283-5
Mortimer, John, I 187-9
Moulton, Joseph, II 54
Mountain, Bishop, I 226
Mount Julian Hotel, I 99
Mount Pleasant, I 148, II 265
Muncey River Indians, I 5
Munro, George, II 6n.
Murphy, J. R., II 112n.
Murray Tp., I 200
'Musical barn', II 264
Muskoka District, I 53, 191, 312, 317, II 21, 39, 56, 91, 117, 120 *et seq.*
Musson, Thomas, II 141

Napanee district, I 102n., II 215, 218
Nassagawaya Tp., II 205
National feeling, I 254
'National Policy', II 288
National Societies, I 167
National Trust Company, I 299n.
Need, Thomas, I 226n., II 169
Nelson family, I 211
Nelson Tp., II 107
Neptune Inn, Quebec, II 317
Neutral Indians, 5
Newark (Niagara), II 129
Newbigging House, Toronto, I 116
Newcastle, II 54, 153 *et seq.*
Newmarket, I 237, 313, II 39, 191
Newton Plow, II 149
Newtonbrook, II 179
Newtonville, I 163, II 62
New Year's Day, I 214, 237
Niagara Falls, II 70n.
Niagara Falls Museum, I 262n.
Niagara-on-the-Lake, I 17
Niagara region, I 3, 22, 57n., 212, 246, 258-62, 283, 300-1, II 42, 46, 70, 84, 112-3, 129, 169, 215
Niagara Spectator, I 279n.
Norfolk County, I 102, 173, 201, 274, II 3n., 16n., 114, 152-3, 230
Northern Railway, II 138
North Monaghan Tp., I 165, 184, 299
Northumberland County, I 3, II 112
Northumberland County Agricultural Society, II 101
Northwest Rebellion, I 155
Norwich Tp., I 135, 151, 190n., 312, II 34, 36, 59-60
Norwood, I 248n., 249
Nottawasaga Tp., I 140n., 167n.
Nurseries: Toronto, II 108; London, II 108; Bytown, II 108-9

Oakland Tp., II 167
Oakville district, II 110-1, 322
O'Brien, Mary, I 215
O'Connor, Michael, I 129, II 352
O'Connor's Inn, Toronto, I 129, II 352
Ogle, Henry, II 147
O'Hara, James, I 71, II 203
O'Hara, Mrs. James, I 71, II 203
O'Kelly, Ebenezer, I 259
O'Kelly, Mrs. Ebenezer, I 259
Old Mill on the Humber, II 239
Omemee, II 174
Omemee tannery, II 259
Ontario Agricultural College, II 36n., 286-7
Ontario Drainage Act (1872), II 26
Ontario Educational Association, I 171 *et seq.*
Ops Tp., I 209, II 167-8
Orangemen, I 141, 153, 166, 168, 196n., 250, II 343
Orangeville, I 55, 168
O'Reilly, ——, I 15
Orillia district, I 65, 136, 264-5, 333, II 267
Oro Tp., I 113, 136, 311
Orser, Solomon, I 108
Osgoode, R. R., II 372, 374
Oshawa (*early* Skae's Corners), II 267
Otonabee Tp., I 96, 276-7, II 35, 48, 277
Ottawa (Bytown) region, I 124n., 137, 153n., 194, 200, 228, 283, 317, II 20n., 108-9, 131-2, 199n.
Otterville, I 135, 151
Owen, E. A., I 102, 104, 154n., 201, 202n., 208, 338, II 30
Owen, W. F., II 35
Owen Sound, II 35, 117
Oxford Tp., II 34

Page, Rhoda Anne, I 185, 209n.
Pakenham, II 48
Pakenham Tp., I 254
Palmer, Fanny, II 76
Palmer, John, I 225
Palmer, J., I 147
Palmer's Daguerrotypes, II 138
Pankhurst, Emmeline, I 130n.
Pankhurst, Sylvia, I 130n.
Pape, Joseph, II 108
Parasites, control of, II 287
Paris, I 247n.
Parney, Ezra, I 253n.
Parney, William, I 253n.
Parry Sound, II 117
Parson's Improved Coal Oil Lamp, II 157
Partridge, ——, II 80
Patrons of Husbandry, II 287
Patrons of Industry, II 287-8
Patterson, Tibby, I 308
Payne, Charlotte, II 191
Payne, Levi, I 298
Payne, Robert, I 337
Payne, Sarah, I 298
Payne family, I 253n., 337
Peachey, James, I 13
Peake, Dr., I 214
Pearce, Peter, I 194, 248n., 249
Peel County, I 109, 148n., II 236n.
Peel Tp., I 240
Pennant's *Voyage to the Hebrides,* II 188n.
Perry's Creek, II 228
Peterborough region, I 83, 137, 160, 164, 194, 219, 229, 249, 287, 299, 300, 314, 335, II 35, 48, 82, 138, 207n., 215, 221-2, 372
Perth County, II 90
Perth (Lanark County) region, I 164, 218, 246, 308, 318, 323, II 29, 85, 133
Pesticides, II 287
Peterson, Henry W., I 171
Petite Côte, I 8-9
Petworth Emigration Committee, I 76
Philip, Samuel, II 102
Phillips, W. J., I 224n.
Picken, Andrew, II 46n.
Pickering, Joseph, I 77-8, 221, 229, 237, 246, 270, 283, 308, 328, II 41, 43, 49, 57, 63, 64, 71, 74, 92, 114, 226
Pickering Tp., II 9
Pickling in brine, II 237-8
Picton (*early* Hallowell), I 181, II 15, 57n.
Pigeon Lake, II 283
Pilant, Alice B., II 329
Pioneer survival, II 289-90
Playfair, Hugo, I 80
Playter, George, I 5, 67-8
Ploughing matches, II 133-5
Poets and versifiers, I 167-9
Poole, Thomas, I 248n.
Poore, Sir Edward, I 197
Population, growth of, I 217-9
Porcupine district, I 178
Port Dover, II 188
Port Hope (*early* Smith's Creek), I 7, 105, 116, 193, 212n., 239, 242n., 284, 287, II 62, 149
Port Maitland, I 331
Port Rowan, I 102, 171
Port Vernon, II 127-8
Potash-making, I 341-2, II 210-4
Powell, Jane, I 242
Powell, Jim, I 242
Powell, William Dummer, I 224n., 272n.
Poynter, Sir E. J., II 259
Prescott, I 39, 66
Press-filling machine, II 242
Preston, I 237
Preston, Mrs. Ralph G., II 293-4
Price, Mrs. Carl, II 130
Prices, controlled, II 286; of meat, pre-1820, II 77-8; of produce, 1860, II 101; of stock, pre-1820, II 77-8; of strawberries, 1870's, II 111; various, I 92-4, II 64; of wheat, 1830's, II 64
Priest's Mill, Alexandria, II 218
Prince Albert (village), I 108
Prince Edward County, I 250, II 93, 109n.
Prince, John, II 351
Prince of Wales (later Edward VII), II 325
Progressive improvement in homes, II 283-5
Provincial Exhibitions, II 136 *et seq.*; at Cobourg, II 141-3; at Hamilton, II 141, 192; at London, II 138; at Niagara, II 143; at Toronto, II 136-41
Punshon, Percy, I 117
Purdy's Mills (Lindsay), II 218

Quebec city , early agriculture at, I 6
Queensborough, II 94
'Queen's Bush', I 211, 240, II 117
Queenston, II 129
Quilt-making, II 189, 190

Radcliff, T. W., I 285, 295, II 7n.
Rail-splitting, II 16
Rainham Tp., I 237-8
Rains, William, I 206n.
Raising bee, I 254
Rake-Bar Hay Loader, II 292
Rama Indian Village, II 268
Ramsay Tp., I 184, 231-2, 275, II 133, 273
Rankin, C., I 266
Raspberry vinegar, II 237
Rattlesnakes, II 70
Reach Tp., I 108, 115, 198
Reaman, G. E., I 230n., 238n.
Rebellion of 1837, I 272n., 277, II 162

Rees, Dr., I 102n.
Reid, George, II 283-5

Religion and Churches:
Baptist, I 198-200, 212
  Beamsville Church, I 212
  Simcoe Church, I 199
  Tobermory Church, I 199
Bible Christian, I 195
Church of England (Anglican, Episcopal), I 193-7, 205, 206, 214, 226, 279, II 265
  Brantford, Mohawk Chapel, II 329 354
  Cobourg, St. Peter's, I 197
  Creemore, St. Luke's, II 265
  Fenelon Falls, I 193
  Toronto, Holy Trinity, I 197n.
  Toronto, St. James', I 197
Friends (Quakers), I 202 *et seq.*, 213, 216, 238
  Sharon Temple, I 203-4, 213, 216
Jewish, I 216n.
  Montreal (1777), I 216n.
  Toronto (1849), Holy Blossom Synagogue, I 216n.
Mennonites, I 160-1, 202, 204, 213, 238
  Edgeley Church, I 204
Methodist, I 145, 191, 194, 195, 197-8, 200, 205n., 212, 226
  Camp-meetings, I 191-2
  Deer Lake (Haliburton) Methodist (?), II 276
  (Near)Renfrew, I 195
Millerite, I 205
Presbyterian, I 191, 195-8, 200, 201, 205n., 215, 234,
  Beaverton, I 201
  Cobourg, 'Old Kirk', I 200
Roman Catholic, I 145, 190, 196n., 205n., 214, 250, 291,
  Récollet missionaries, I 6
Salvation Army, I 213n.
Scriven, Joseph (Port Hope and Bewdley), I 193
Unitarian Society, I 216n.
  Montreal (1842), I 216n.
  Toronto (1845), I 216n.
United Church, I 195

Related to Religion:
Burial-grounds and funerals, I 206-11
  Arvills, I 209-10
  Bishop Strachan's funeral, I 211
  Butler burying-ground, I 210
  Carr (Thomas) grave, II 279
  Hearse, Tiverton, I 211
  Hill (George A.) grave, I 207
  Rogers graves, I 208
  Wakes, I 209-10
Christmas, I 214-6, 237
Church membership, I 205n.
Clergymen, as teachers, I 197; as leaders, I 234; educational standards of, I 197n.
Clergy Reserves, I 196-7, 276-7
Commercialization, I 159, 215-6, 237
  Christmas, I 215-6, 237
  Easter, I 159, 237
Dancing, opposition to, I 145
Education, attitude towards, I 197n.
Marriage service, I 194, 206
Mourning, I 209-10
Music in churches, I 213-4
'Other-worldliness', I 202
Religious names, for settlements and children, I 198, 246-7
Religious sentiments, framed, I 70
Sunday, as a day of rest, I 340
Sunday Schools, I 198
Thanksgiving Day, Indians, I 5; settlers, I 214, 237

Remedies and drugs, preparation of, II 235-6
Remittance-men, II 266n.
Rempel, John I., I 52n.
Renfrew-on-the-Bonnechère, II 130
Renfrew County, I 103, 195, 290, II 130
Rennie, Simpson, II 145
Reynolds, Nila, I 104n., 115n., 145n.
Rice, *see* Wild rice
Rice Lake region, I 3, 7, 105, 110, 192, 239, 276-7, 284, 286n., 299, 300, 324, 339, II 266
Richards, John, I 276-7
Richmond district, I 218, II 132
Richmond Hill, 1 38n.
Rideau district, I 22-3, 57, 74, 77, 93, 146, 219, 273, 283, 286-7, 302, 305, 309
Riddell, Walter, II 42, 73, 101-4, 149, 157, 160, 161
Riddell, William R., II 42n., 232n.
Roberts, Charles G. D., I 186n.
Roberts, John, I 32n.
Roberts, Phoebe, I 127, 202
Robertson, Douglas S., I 7n.
Robertson, John Ross, I 60n.
Robinson, Sir John Beverley, I 272n.
Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Duc de la, I 20
Rochester, N.Y., I 15, 217
Roddick, William, II 102
Rogers, Florence, I 155
Rogers, James, I 313,
Rogers family, I 208
Rose, A. H. W., I 65, 282
Ross Mills, Elora, I 231
Rossa, O'Donovan, I 155
Rouge River, I 108
Royal Scots encampment, I 327
Rubidge, Charles, II 35
Ruskin, John, I 165n.
Russell, Peter, I 289

Russell County, I 232
Ryan, James B., II 156-7
Ryerson, Egerton, I 28, 171, 179 *et seq.*, 197n., 200

St. Andrews, L. C., II 20n.
St. Catharines district, I 24, 171, II 42, 98, 192
St. Clair region, I 120, 140, 255-8, 283, 300, II 91, 106, 108
St. German, Joseph, II 6n.
St. John, Capt., I 136
St. Joseph Island, I 206n.
St. Lawrence region, I 66, II 16 *et seq.*, 265, 345
St. Mary's, II 165
Sales appeal in advertising, II 150
Sallows, Eby, II 264
Sallows, James, I 154
Salmon, Robert, II 147
Salting meat, II, 241
Samplers, II 191-2
Sand Point, I 103
Sandwich district, II 218; *see also* Windsor
Sanger, Margaret, I 130n.
Sangster, II 13
Santa Claus, I 215-6, 237
Sarnia, I 9, II 323
Sarnia tollgate, II 323
Sauerkraut, making of, II 233
Sauriol, Charles, II 112n.
Sausage-making, II 243
Sawyer Agricultural Works, Hamilton, II 67
Scadding, Henry, I 128, 197
Scald cream, II 250n.
Scarborough Tp., II, 134, 145, 157, 288
Scarlett, Edward, II 140
Scarlett, Samuel, II 140
Scherck, M. G., II 10, 16-17, 68, 73,
Schoolhouse, abandoned, II 13
Schools, I 170-89; Elementary, I 170 *et seq.*; Girls' private, I 176-9; Grammar, I 170-1; Separate, I 183-4
Scott, Adam, I 50
Scott's Mills (Peterborough), II 218
Scott, A. Sherriff, I 110
Scott, James, I 311
Scott, James B., II 12, 167-8
Scott, John, II 226
Scott, 'Elder', I 198
Scriven, Joseph, I 193
Scugog Indians, I 198
Secord, David, I 28
Self-Propelled Corn Picker, II 292
Servants, II 266

SETTLERS, NATIONALITIES AND TYPES OF:
  Americans, I 220-3, 242n.
  'American squatters', I 303-6
  Aristocrats, capitalists, half-pay officers, 'gentlemen', I 70, 72, 219, 225n. 266-8, 279, 289, 295, II 124, 263-5, 271, 342-3
  Dutch, *see* German
  English, *see especially* I 220, 224, 238, 240
  Ex-Chartists, I 242-3
  French, I 8-10, 218
  German and Dutch, I 237-8, 304, II 100, 179-80, 193, 233, 254, 267
  'Hillbilly' settlers, I 246
  Indians, I 3-7, II 268
  Irish, I 49, 51, 219-20, 229-31, 250, 297, II 133, 273-4
  Loyalists, I 10-28, 170-1, 194, 219-20, 279, II 187, 221, 289
  Mercenary soldiers (foreign), I 218-9
  Negroes, escaped slaves, I 184, 240
  Pensioners and discharged servicemen, I 129, 206n., 218, 228-9; *see also* Veterans
  Remittance-men, II 118 *et seq.*
  Scottish, I 220, 232-5, 242, II 264-6, 272-4
  Squatters, I 306-8
  Veterans of wars: of the Peninsular War, I 129, 206n.; of other parts of the Napoleonic Wars, I 207, 218, II 242-3; of Waterloo, I 207 *inter alia*; of the War of 1812, I 218; of the American Revolution, I 218-9 (*see also* Loyalists)
  Welsh, I 206n., 223-4

SETTLERS, CHARACTERISTICS OF:
  Bees and co-operation, I 64, 150, 254, II 71-2, 130, 143, 163, 188, 238
  Betting, *see especially* II 132
  Burials and funerals, attitude towards, I 206-11, II 279
  Classes of society in towns, I 248
  Competition and rivalry, fondness for, II 16n., 54, 71-2, 133-5, 163-5
  Courting and 'sparking', I 143-4, 158-9
  Dancing, fondness for, I 145-6, 159-60, II 130
  Democracy and equalitarian tendencies, enthusiasm for, I 220 *et seq.*, 241-5; hatred of, I 170-1, 183, 205, 220 *et seq.*, 225
  Deterioration of, due to hardship and isolation, I 245-6, 248, 253, II 122 *et seq.*
  Dramatics, liking for, I 151, 160, 164
  Drinking and drunkenness, I 146, 148, 150, 156, 159-60, 209, 212, 232-3, 249, 338, II 266
  Elections, conduct at, I 153n., 163
  Fighting, gouging, mob violence, vandalism, I 145-6, 250, II 132-3, 160
  'Hired man', status of, I 244-5
  Hospitality, generosity, philanthropy, *see especially* I 248-50, 254

  - Humour, I 96, 138, 252-3; *see also* Lingo
  - Illiteracy, I 170-1, 202
  - Independence, *see especially* II 262-85, 293-5
  - Inquisitiveness, *see especially* I 250-2
  - Intellectual life and its improvement, poets and versifiers, I 151, 165-6, 167-9, 186-9, 242
  - Intolerance, narrow-mindedness, jealousy, envy, *see especially* I 156, 158, 160, 194, 204, 214n.; *see also* Fighting
  - Large families, I 253
  - Lingo (American), loquaciousness, I 85, 100-1, 118, 120, 121-3, 250-2, II 77n.
  - Loyalty to Crown, variations in and reasons for, I 232-3; *see also* 'Family Compact' and Rebellion of 1837
  - Market day, II 135
  - Militia parade-day, *see especially* II 133
  - National feeling, I 254
  - National Societies of St. Andrew, St. David, St. George, and St. Patrick, I 167, 232, 237
  - Native Sons association, I 169
  - Old age in early settlers, I 253-4
  - Penuriousness, I 248
  - Poverty, pauper immigrants, beggars, I 219, 243
  - Respect for achievements of first settlers, I 247n., 248-50, 254
  - Servants, attitude towards, I 243-4, II 266
  - Settlement duties, I 276-7
  - Shivarees, camp-meetings, funerals, wakes, and conduct at, I 152-3, 209-10
  - Singing, fondness for, I 144-5, 149, 156, 164n., 168-9, 191-2, 208-9, 213-4
  - Smoking, I 148, 150
  - Snobbery, dislike for; 'gentility' and 'superiority', resentment towards claims of, I 225n., 241n., 278 *et seq.*, II 343
  - Status of women, I 130-42, 172, 252-3
  - Superstition, *see especially* I 95-106, II 85
  - Suspicion of city people, I 248
  - Temperance Societies, I 126, 128, 163-4, 209, 212; legislation, 249n.
  - Walking, fondness for and ability in, I frontispiece, 115, 140n., 202n., II 188n.

- Seymour Tp., I 200
- Shade, Absalom, I 232, II 35
- Shade's Mills (Galt), II 218
- Share's Harrow, II 41
- Sharman, Silence, I 247
- Sharon (*early* Hope), I 203-4, 213, 216
- Shaw, Capt., II 140
- Shearing wool, II 183
- 'Shebangs', I 314n.
- Shelling corn, II frontispiece
- Shepherd's Falls, II 133
- Shingle-splitting, II 170-1
- 'Ship fever', I 34, 96
- Shirreff, Patrick, I 10, 41, 85, 120, 148-9, 178, 192n., 223, 265, 299, II 39, 50, 56, 60, 75, 82, 85, 218
- Shivarees, I 152-3
- Shoemaking, II 179-82
- Silcog, ——, I 100n.
- Silk industry in Upper Canada, II 192
- Simcoe, John Graves, II 129
- Simcoe, Elizabeth (Mrs. J. G.), I 25, 224, II 70n., 110, 115, 201, 354
- Simcoe County, I 153n.
- Simcoe Lake, *see* Lake Simcoe
- Simpson, B. Napier, Jr., I 60, 62
- Simpson, James, I 51, II 44
- Singer, William, I 100n., 262
- Six Nations Indians, I 218n.
- Slade, Robert, II 280
- Slaght, Elizabeth, I 253n.
- Slaght, Job, II 198
- Slaght, Sarah, II 198
- Sloat's Lake, I 97
- Sly, Solomon, I 247
- Smale, Mary L., I 197
- Smith, George, II 103
- Smith, James, I 8
- Smith, J. H., I 183
- Smith, Peter, II 132
- Smith, William, II 103
- Smith Tp., 188, II 215
- Smith's Creek, *see* Port Hope
- Smith's Falls, I 273, II 218
- Smoke-house for meat, II 243-4
- Smyth, Coke, II 345
- Snider, C. H. J., I 128, 131
- Snider, Claude, I 317
- Snider Collection of pioneer relics, II 242
- Snyder, Martin, II 160
- Soap-making, II 207-10
- Sombra Tp., I 255
- Sorting wool, II 183
- Southwold Tp., I 100n.
- Spalding's Inn, Grafton, II 347
- Sparks, Nicholas, I 194
- Sparta, II 24n.
- Sperm-oil lamps, II 248
- Spilsbury, Francis, I 299, 300
- Spinning, II 184-5, 189
- Springfield, *see* Erindale
- Springs and wells, II 8-12, 100
- Sproule, ——, I 165
- Squair, John, II 156
- Squaring timber, I 309
- Squatters, I 303-6, II 117

Stamford Tp., I 3
Stanhope Tp., I 115n., 156, 172, II 117
Stanley, N. B., I 307
Staples, Owen, I 155, 224n.
Starch-making, II 224-5
Steam mills, II 218-9
Steele, John, I 187-8
Steelyard Stump-lifter, II 153
Steiner, Florence B., I 216n.
Stephen Tp., II 180n.
Stephens, Miss, II 144
Stevenson, Robert, I 138n., 230, 234, 253, II 45, 47, 50, 109-10, 266-7, 314-42
Stevenson, Robert Louis, I 31-2
Stewart, Thomas, II 82
Stewart, Frances (Mrs. T.), II 82
Stewart, W. A., II 287n.
Stisted Road, II 122
Stone, Enos, I 15
Stone, Isaac, I 15
Stone, Joel, I 23-4
Stoney Lake, I 99, II 228
Stoning machines, I 342-3
Stopes, Marie, I 130n.
Stormont County, I 233n.
Stouffville, I 237
Stowe, Augusta, I 130n.
Stowe, Emily, I 130n.
Strachan, John, I 164, 171, 183, 211, 226, 243, 244, 272n., 279n.
Straw work, II 192-3
Strawberry picking, Oakville, II 111
Street, Timothy, I 88
Street's Mill, Streetsville, II 218
Streetsville, I 88, II 198, 218, 272
Streetsville Flax Mill, II 198
Stretton, Sempronius, I 288
Strickland, Samuel, I 56, 58, 186, 318n., 335, II 18, 113, 119-21, 168, 171, 204, 263
Strickland home, Lakefield, II 263
Stuart, John, I 171
Stumping machines, I 325-6
Sturgeon Lake district, II 115, 271; *see also* Langton, John
Subsidies, II 286
Success in settlement, II 262-85
Sullivan farm, II 96
Sunnidale Tp., I 167n.
Survival, pioneer, II 289-90
Sutton, II 275
Sydney Tp., II 46, 95n.

Taber, Russell, I 69, 133, II 87, 103, 155, 162, 205, 295
Tailor shop, II 178
Talbot, Edward, I 72, 174, 229, 252, 270-2, 326n., II 132, 356
Talbot, Thomas, I 206n., 229, 247, 282, 315, II 43, 59, 68n., 71, 90, 92, 114-6, 188, 216
Talbot settlement, *see especially* II 6n., 72n., 188, 216
Talbot River region, II 21
Talman, J. J., I 209n.
Taylor, Emerson, I 119, 128, 194n.
Taylor, Frank C., II 86, 349
Taylor, Henry, I 174, II 49, 286
Taylor, James, I 84, 131-2, II 277
Taylor, Thomas, II 102
Tea, substitutes for, II 237
Telephone, I 111
Telegraph, I 111, 117
Telford, William, I 187-8
Temperance hotels, I 126, 128
Temperance legislation, I 249n.
Temperance societies, I 163-4, 209, 212
Tenny, 'Father', I 213-4
Tennyson, Lord, I 165n.
Terwilligar, Sarah, I 205n.
Thames valley, I 283
Thessalon, II 281
Thompson, Samuel, I 87-8, 90, 140n.
Thomson, John, I 93, 216, 312, 335n., II 6, 207
Tradesmen, payment of, II 280
Thorah Tp., I 115, II 5
Thoreau, Henry David, I 216n., 230n., 304, II 124n.
Thornhill, I 102n., 197
Thickening bee, II 188
Thrasher, ——, II 93n.
Thrasher's Corners, II 93n.
Tier, Mrs. R. H., II 130
Timber rights, I 314
Tinker, the, II 181
Tinning, Thomas, II 372
Tiverton, I 211, II 211
Tobacco Indians, I 5
Tobermory, I 199
Tollgates, I 108
Tomstown, I 259
Toronto (*early* York) region, I 41-2, 56, 216n., 240, 284, 288, 289, 291-2, II 114, 136, 138-41
Toronto Daily Star, I 194n., 213n., 264n.
Toronto *Globe*, II 165
Toronto *Globe and Mail*, II 232n., 293n., 294n.
Toronto Island, I 129
Toronto Market, I 131-2
Toronto and Nipissing Railway, II 67
Toronto Hunt Club Races, II 142
Toshach, John, I 318
Town Meeting, I 112n.
Townsend Tp., II 3n.
Tractor power, II 290, 292
Tractor-Controlled Wide Disc Harrow, II 292
Trades, development of, II 257-61, 280
Trafalgar Tp., I 314, II 270
Traill, Catharine, I 56, 58, 59, 65, 72, 82, 124, 136-7, 185-6, 304, 310, 320, 322, 325, 332, II 8, 14, 28, 34, 35, 69, 77, 84, 85, 95, 100, 106, 109, 110, 144,

173, 176, 210, 219, 222, 224, 226, 229, 240, 270, 370n.
Traill, Thomas, I 335
Treasure, James, II 182
Treffry, John, II 59
Trent region, I 7, 99, 113, 280, 283, 300, 314
Trenton, II 344, 346, 348
Trewhella, Ethel Willson, II 191
Troyer, Dr., I 102, 104
Tryon, P.E.I., I 126
Tucker's Annual Register, II 66
Tull, Jethro, II 149
Turner, J. M. W., I 339
Turkey Point, I 208, II 71n.

'U. E. Rights', I 279
United Farmers Co-operative Company, II 288
United Farmers of Ontario, II 288
United Farm Women of Ontario, II 288
Upper Canada, changes in name of, I 263n.
Upper Canada College, I 171, II 226
Upper Canada Gazette, I 185n.
Uxbridge Tp., II 19

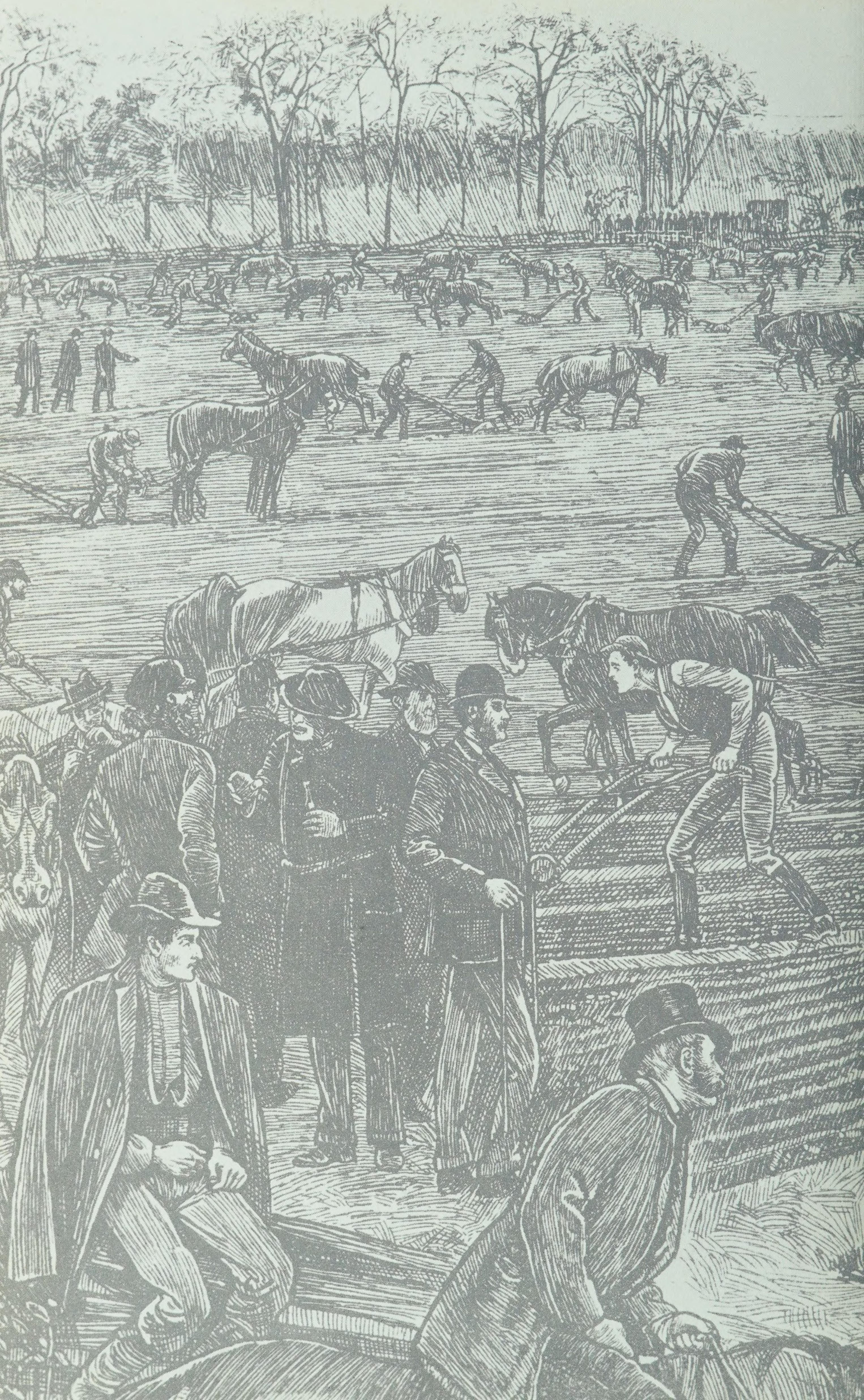
Van Buren, B. K., I 165n.
Van Diemen's Land, II 162
Vanessa, II 175
Van Norman's Furnace, I 198
Van Nostrand, J. C., I 60, 62
VanSittart, Admiral, I 70, 279-80
Vaughan Tp., I 196, 232, II 4, 134
Vehicles and tools, hand-made, II 174-6
Veness, Harriet, I 32
Veness, John, I 32
Verner, Sir Frederick, II 322, 370n.
Vernet, Henry du, II 46
Versifiers and poets, I 186-9
Vertical integration, II 287
Verulam Tp., I 140, 225, 286n.
Veterans of Waterloo, I 255n.
Vinegar-making, II 235
Victoria County, II 289
Victoria Magazine, I 185
Vittoria Tp., I 198

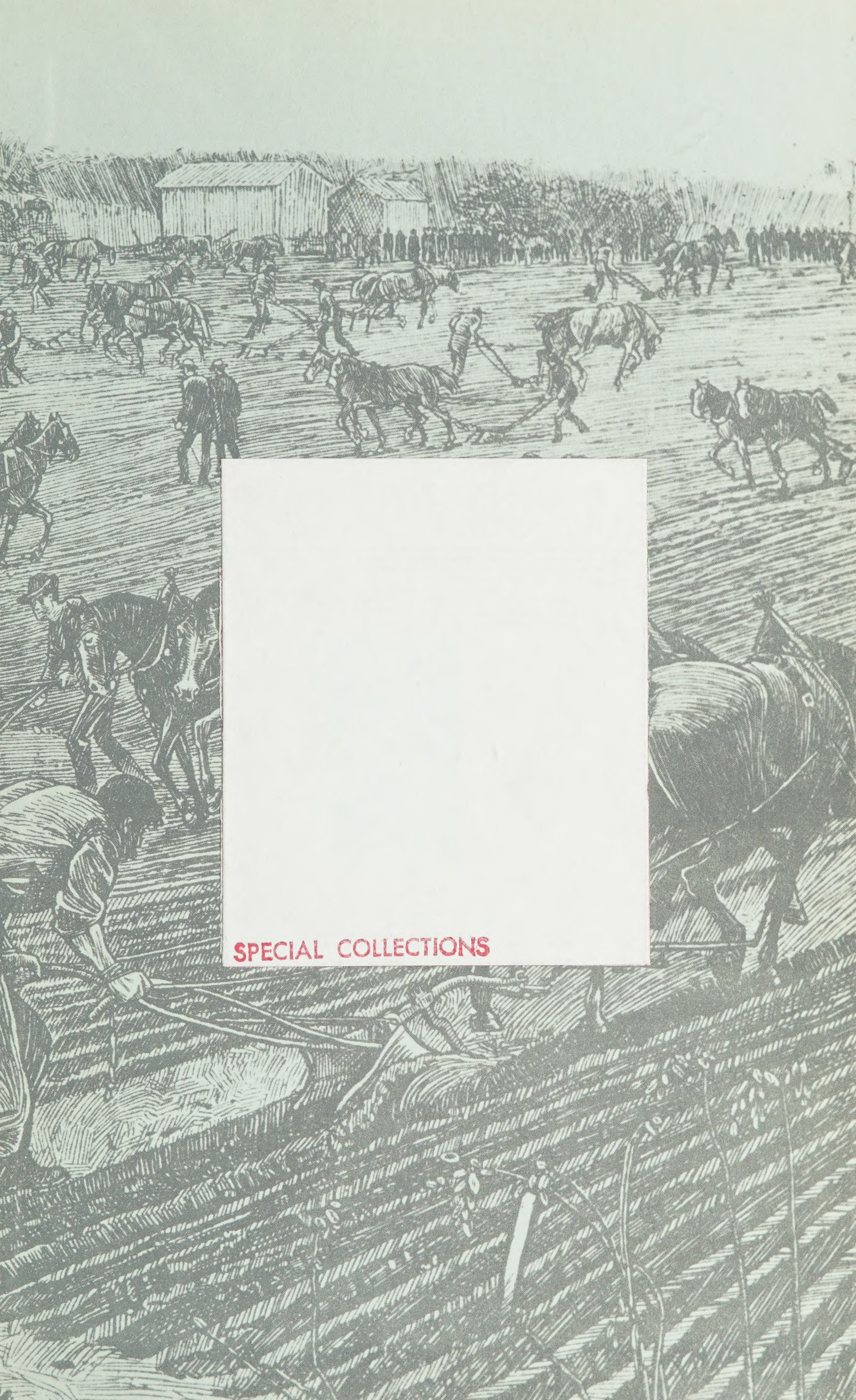
Wade, John, II 161
Wade, Robert, II 101-2
Walker, Harry J., II 130
Walker, Herbert, II 264
Walker, Mrs. Herbert, II 264
Wallis, Hugh, I 226n.
Wallis, James, I 226n.
Wallis, R. W., I 262
Walsh, Edward, I 289
Walsingham Tp., II 31, 90
Warburton, Eliot, II 119
Ward, Barbara, I 11n.
Ward's Mills, Wardsville (*now* Smith's Falls), II 218
Ware, T. H., I 4, 33, 35, 50, 65, 79, 100n., 113, 114, 136, 220n., 222, 264, 311, 333, II 26, 268
Warminster, II 264
Warsaw, I 191n.
Wash-day, I 133, 134
Waterloo County, I 160, 237-8, II 267
Waterloo Tp., II 133-4
Water mills, II 216-9
Watson, John, I 244
Watson, Mary Jane, I 85
Watts, Martha, I 191n.
Weaving, II 186-7, 189
Webster's Falls, near Dundas, II 326
Weights and measures, I 341
Weir, F. G., I 118
Welland Canal, I 108
Welland County, I 238
Weller, William, I 109
Wellesley Tp., I 240
Wellington, Duke of, I 233n.
Wellington County, II 118
Wellington District, I 171
Wells and springs, II 8-12, 100
Welsh, Dr., I 104n.
Western Fair Grounds, London, II 137
West Flamborough Tp., I 238, II 52
West Guilford, I 104 n.
Westminster New Settlement, I 52n.
Weston, James, II 123
Whale, Robert, I 301
Whaley, Eric, I 154n., 155
Wheeler, John P., II 141
Whitby (*early* Perry's Corners), I 108, II 267
White, Charles, II 256
White's barber shop, Gore Bay, II 256
White House, Gore's Landing, II 266n.
Whitefield, Edwin, II 48
Whitney, Sir James, I 249n.
Wickson, Paul, II 259
Wigle, Wendel, I 157
Wild pigeons, II 70-1, 231-2
Wild rice, I 7-8, II 223-4
Wild turkeys, II 70-1, 100
Wilkie, David, I 310n., 334-5
Wilkinson, H., I 200
Wilkinson, T. H., II 65
Willard, Charlotte, I 244
Willard, Frances, I 130n.
Williamstown, I 231
Willson, David, I 204, 213, 216
Windatt, Thomas, II 156
Windham Tp., II 152-3
Windmills, II 218
Windsor (*early* Sandwich), I 120, 171, 230, II 74n., 218
Wine-making, II 239-40
Wire fencing, II 23
Wollstonecraft, Mary, I 130n.
Women's Institutes, II 146, 288
Wood, George, II 280
Wood, Walter, I 254
Wood, ——, I 166
Wood's Mower, II 157
Wood's Self-Rake Reaper, II 151
Wood, articles made from, II 167-8

Woodham-Smith, Cecil, II 343n.
Wood-pulp and paper industry, II 214
Woodstock district, I 70, 225n., 266-8, 279, 289, II 120
Wordsworth, William, I 165n.
Workman, Thomas, II 228
Wright, Philemon, II 46, 179, 195, 226, 257
Wright's Mills (*also* Chaudière Falls, *now* Hull), II 179
Wright, Col., II 134

Yarmouth Tp., II 182
Yeast, preparation of, II 219-20
Yonge Street region, I 282, 302, II 134
York, *see Toronto*
York (Toronto), early land grants at, I 284, 288, 289, 291-2
York Artists' Association, I 164
York County, I 3, 60, 204, 313
Yorkville, I 60
Young, George, I 165
Young's *Annals of Agriculture,* II 129
Young's Point, I 208, II 88
Young Men's Christian Association, I 164

Zorra Tp., I 198, 232, 320, II 274





SPECIAL COLLECTIONS